

TOWARDS  
A STUDY OF  
ASPECT IN MALTESE

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To

my father and mother

who

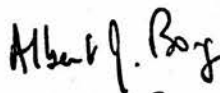
by believing, hoping and loving

supported this venture



### Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis  
has been composed by myself

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Albert J. Borg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the first name.

(signed) Albert J. Borg

## Abstract

The dissertation sets out to examine the aspectual meaning, in terms of the localistic notion of a journey, present in the Maltese verb, which with few exceptions, is realised by two finite forms, the Perfect and the Imperfect. This study is extended to the so-called present participle, which in certain cases occurs instead of a finite verb; and to a construction in which the verb in the Imperfect is preceded by the form qed.

In Maltese there are productive morphological processes whereby an intransitive verb can be made transitive, and a transitive verb can be given a passive meaning. It is only the present participle associated with a certain subclass of intransitive verbs that occurs instead of a finite verb. An examination of the grammatical status of this participle involves several steps. First the different types of verb (intransitive, transitive and passive) are studied, followed by the nouns associated with each type. It is shown that nouns, like verbs, exhibit an aspectual distinction. The verb and the noun are then set up as the two main parts-of-speech, and participles are grouped in an intermediate class, that of adjectivalizations, defined in terms of features (morphological, syntactic and semantic) shared with verbs and/or nouns. The adjectivalization associated with the passive verb turns

out to be most adjective-like, that associated with the transitive verb, most noun-like, and that associated with a certain subclass of intransitive verbs, most verb-like.

In studying the transitive type of verb, it is noted that the preposition 'lil' "to" occurs obligatorily before certain direct objects and optionally before others, while it is obligatorily absent before yet others. A solution to this problem is attempted by invoking the distinction between first and second-order entities. In view of the relevance of this distinction to more than one area of the language, some time is spent on a study of the meaning of 'lil'.

The dissertation ends with a study of the aspectual distinctions involved, together with a brief look at the relation of aspect to tense and modality. The Perfect is characterized as encoding a single completed journey; the Imperfect as encoding an (unbounded) series of repetitions of completed journeys (or unrestricted habituality); the construction with ged and the Imperfect as typically encoding restricted habituality; and the present participle as typically encoding a single journey in progress (progressivity). It is concluded that in Maltese, the aspectual opposition is the fundamental one, and tense and modal associations are seen as deriving from it.

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## Notational conventions

In the text, the following notational conventions have been observed : single quotation marks are used for lexemes and double quotation marks for meanings. Forms are underlined. Unless otherwise stated, both lexemes and forms are cited in the standard orthography.

Note that in this work I do not confront the problem of deciding between what constitutes inflectional morphology and what is derivational morphology in Maltese. As will be appreciated from the introductory exposition in chapter one, and at different points in the development of the argument, it is generally not quite clear how the distinction can be drawn for Maltese. It is against this problematic background that my use of single quotation marks for lexemes has to be understood.

Double quotation marks are also used for quotations from other authors. In such quotations I have taken the liberty of regularising the different notational usages (for lexemes, forms and meanings) in accordance with my own use. My interpolations in certain quotations (whether to give the meaning of a form or to add an explanatory note) are marked by square brackets.

Exemplificatory sentences are assigned a number, which when referred to in the text, is put in parentheses. As far as possible, the Maltese sentence is given in

one line. In the line beneath, a literal gloss is provided, translating the Maltese version word for word. The English equivalent is given in the third line and placed between double quotation marks.

Of the symbols used in the Maltese orthographic system, note the following : ċ for the voiceless palato-alveolar affricate /tʃ/; ġ for the voiced palatoalveolar affricate /dʒ/; ż for the voiced alveolar fricative /z/; z for the voiceless alveolar affricate /ts/; x for the voiceless palatoalveolar fricative; j for the palatal open approximant /y/; q for the glottal stop /ʔ/ and h for the voiceless pharyngeal fricative /h/. The symbols gh and h represent abstract segments (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.2) but in certain contexts they correspond to /h/. An apostrophe ' is used instead of gh in certain words (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.5).

## CHAPTER ONE

## 1. Aim of the Study

This study started out as an attempt to explore the interrelationship of aspect and the aspectual character of the verb in Maltese. I use the term 'aspect' to refer to the grammatical opposition in Maltese, whereby most verbal lexemes are realised by two forms, traditionally called the Perfect and the Imperfect, eg. mexa (roughly "he walked") and jimxi (roughly "he walks") respectively. In this broad use of the term (as opposed to its specific meaning in Slavonic linguistics, cf. for instance, Comrie 1976, § 0.3) I follow Lyons (1977, § 15.6) who includes under it grammaticalized oppositions in the structure of particular languages based upon the notions of duration, instantaneity, frequency, initiation, completion, etc.

The term 'aspectual character' (or simply 'character') is also taken from Lyons (1977, § 15.6) and is used to refer to that part of the meaning of a verb whereby it normally denotes one kind of situation rather than another (the difference, for instance, between a state and an event).

In Maltese however, in the case of certain verbs, there is also another form, the so-called present participle, eg. miexi "he is walking", which occurs very frequently

instead of a finite form of the verb (that is, instead of a Perfect or Imperfect form : cf. below, ch. 1, § 2.1.1), and this is clearly relevant to a study of aspect. Furthermore the form ged which is assumed to be an abbreviation of the present participle qieghed "he is located" (cf. ch. 5, § 2.2) of a verb of location 'qaghad' "he was located", also occurs quite frequently before the Imperfect form of the verb, eg. ged jimxi (which can also be translated as 'he is walking'. For an indication of the status of gh, cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.2).

The study of aspect could have been carried out exclusively in terms of the distinction mexa / jimxi (that is, of the Perfect / Imperfect opposition) and in relation to different semantic subclasses of verbs. However this approach seems arbitrary, by-passing as it does the problem of the occurrence of the present participle. Instead, I decided to study aspect only in relation to one semantic subclass of verb, which also exhibits the present participle (and specifically 'mexa' "he walked"), but to prepare for this study by attempting to obtain a better understanding of the grammatical status and the semantic nature of this form.

The grammatical opposition just referred to can be called inflectional, although both the Perfect and the Imperfect inflect further for person, number and gender (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.1). In addition to this opposition

however, verb lexemes in Maltese enter into special morphological and semantic relationships with each other through a complex system of derivational morphology. Before proceeding further therefore, it will be convenient to give as brief a presentation as possible of the traditional treatment of the derivational morphology in Maltese (operative not only in the case of verbs but also in the case of nouns and other expressions), starting with the (morphologically based) classification of the verb.

## 2. Maltese derivational morphology

In Maltese, verb forms that (appear to) derive from the same base nonetheless express rather different 'meanings'. Thus mexa "he walked" is related to mexxa "he made someone walk" or "he led" by a morphological process involving the doubling of the second consonant. The relationship can also be seen to hold on the semantic level : 'mexxa' is the causative of 'mexa'. There is also another verb form tmexxa meaning "he was made to walk" or "he was led" which is also clearly related to mexa and mexxa morphologically, via the prefix t- and semantically in that 'tmexxa' is the passive of 'mexxa'. Traditionally verbs like mexxa and tmexxa are called derived forms of the verb mexa. Ten classes of verb forms are distinguished, of which the first form only is regarded as not derived. Mexa is classified as a first form verb. Before looking



at the derivational morphology proper (cf. ch. 1, § 2.2) it will be convenient to take a look at the inflection of the verb, irrespective of which (derived) form it belongs to (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.1).

The three verbs mentioned so far all display the Perfect / Imperfect opposition, namely mexa / jimxi, mexxa / imexxi and tmexxa / jitmexxa. In general this is true of most verbs in the language independently of their (historical) origin. However by and large it is only verbs of Semitic origin which display derivational relationships of the type alluded to above (cf. Aquilina 1959, for an attempt at a systematic presentation of the Semitic and non-Semitic components in Maltese). In so far as most Maltese verbs display the Perfect / Imperfect opposition, this study will be relevant to all of them. However it is important to bear in mind that in the course of the discussion I consider directly only certain verbs from a subclass of Maltese verbs, namely the subclass which displays derivational relationships.

In the case of Maltese linguistics, it is Semitic comparative grammar in general, and Arabic grammar in particular (more specifically, studies of Classical Arabic by Western scholars, cf. Cremona 1961; cf. also Marshall 1968 for a comparison of the derived forms in Classical Arabic and in Maltese) which has served as a model for describing the (Semitic component of the) verbal system,

although there have been attempts in the past to relate Maltese to Phoenician and Hebrew (for some discussion of these and related issues cf. among others Grech 1961, Mangion 1974 and Borg 1978; cf. also Saydon 1966 for the most recent comparison of Maltese and Hebrew).

For my purposes it will be convenient to base my presentation of the traditional classification of the Maltese verb on the work of E. Sutcliffe, A Grammar of the Maltese Language, 1936. Prior to this work there is a noteworthy study in Maltese Taghrif fuq il-Kitba Maltija [Information on Maltese Writing] published in 1924 by the 'Ghaqda tal-Kittieba tal-Malti' [Association of Maltese Writers] and henceforth referred to as Taghrif, 1924.

A. Cremona was one of the members of the commission responsible for the writing of this work and he later published his own study Taghlim fuq il-Kitba Maltija [Teaching on Maltese Writing] which underwent several editions. The one I make use of here is Cremona 1962. There are also several works by J. Aquilina, most important of which for our purposes are Aquilina 1959 and 1965. Other works by other authors will be referred to in the course of this study as the occasion arises.

It is worth noting however that with respect to many of the issues taken up in this study, research has not been pushed significantly beyond the work of Cremona and Sutcliffe, and it is partly in recognition of this, that this presen-

tation of the traditional classification of the Maltese verb is based largely on Sutcliffe's work.

It will be seen from this presentation that the overriding criterion of classification is morphological, so that the semantics often appear unduly untidy. It is not part of my purpose in this study to present an overall alternative classification of the Maltese verb based on semantic considerations, although I certainly think that it is possible to provide one, and possibly some of the later sections in this work may be seen as a first step in this direction (cf. especially ch. 3, § 1.5). The immediate scope of the presentation which follows is simply to provide a background to the discussion in later sections, so that an elementary notion of the morphological processes involved may then be largely assumed. For this reason, critical comments are here avoided as much as possible, but appear later in the review of published and unpublished works relating to the specific issues considered in this dissertation.

### 2.1.1 Verb inflection

Traditionally the third person singular masculine of the Perfect form of the verb is taken as the base form and morphological processes are considered in relation to it. The base form is also the citation form : Sutcliffe gives the meaning of a verb by the corresponding English

infinitive (cf. Sutcliffe, p. 67); I prefer to give the meaning using the third person singular masculine and the past tense.

In Maltese the verb inflects for person (first, second and third) and number (singular and plural for each of the three persons). In addition, in the third person singular the verb inflects for gender (masculine and feminine). The table in (1) sets out the paradigm for the Perfect and Imperfect forms of the verb 'qatel' "he killed". The base form of this verb is usually taken as a convenient model to illustrate the morphological processes involved, even if the actual verb itself does not undergo all the processes.

1. Table exemplifying verb inflection

			<u>Perfect</u>	<u>Imperfect</u>
Singular	{	First	qtilt	noqtol
		Second	qtilt	toqtol
		Third	{	{
		Masculine	qatel	joqtol
		Feminine	qatlet	toqtol
Plural	{	First	qtilna	noqtlu
		Second	qtiltu	toqtlu
		Third	qatlu	joqtlu

It should be noted that while in the Imperfect form of the verb, the first and second person singular forms are distinct, there is no such distinction in the first and second person singular of the Perfect form. However the distinction between first and second person exists not only in the Imperfect singular, but also in the plural in both the Perfect and the Imperfect : it is therefore assumed that in the Perfect singular, the first and second persons have a homophonous realization. Note also that in the Imperfect singular, the second person and the third person feminine are similarly assumed to have a homophonous realization.

For the meaning of these forms, Sutcliffe notes simply that the Perfect corresponds both to the English past and perfect, eg. gatel "he killed" and "he has killed". The Imperfect may denote future action or habitual action. Thus joqtol according to circumstances may mean "he will kill" or "he kills" (pp. 68-69).

The following verbs occur in my speech in the Imperfect form only : 'jaf' "he knows", 'jixbah' "he resembles", 'ifuh' "he has a nice smell", 'itul' "he grows long", 'ihuf' "he wanders round", 'isus' "he follows persistently, he strives", 'jismu' "he is named" (the latter stands apart from the rest in that its inflection rather than following the Imperfect paradigm in (1), retains the third person prefix and suffixes object pronouns instead).

### 2.1.2 First form verbs

With reference to the base form, verbs are said to be trilateral or quadrilateral according to whether they have three or four consonant phonemes / letters (the distinction between phonemes and graphemes or letters is not made in most treatments, so here we will sidestep the issue by talking of consonants and vowels). Quadrilateral verbs will be considered later (cf. ch. 1, 2.6); here I deal only with trilateral verbs.

The sequence of consonants making up the base form is called the root and the consonants in the root are called radicals. Thus the verb 'qatel' realised by the (base) form qatel has the root qtl. Verbs may be strong or weak according to whether they have a root made up of strong consonants or a root containing one or more weak consonants. All the consonants in the phonological system are regarded as strong except w and j (phonetic [w, j]) which are called weak.

Sutcliffe also treats as weak, verbs with the letter gh for third radical. This orthographic sign however, represents what has been called an 'abstract segment' or a 'phonème virtuel' (cf. Brame 1972 and Cohen 1966) and is either not realised by a phonetic segment, in which case there is usually some sign of its underlying presence via a peculiarity in morphological behaviour or else it is

realised by certain other segments in the phonological system.

Typically, a verb such as qatel with a triconsonantal root and a vocalic sequence made up of two vowels, is said to be in the first form. Morphologically, the third person singular masculine Perfect of a first form verb is regarded as the simplest base form. The letters of the verb qatel used as a model (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.1) stand for the first, second and third radicals respectively of a triliteral verb and the quality of the vowel is glossed over by using a small letter 'v'. The model therefore looks as follows: QvTvL.

### 2.1.3 Subclasses of strong first form verbs

Within the class of strong first form verbs, three subclasses are distinguished. A verb like qatel is taken to be regular. But there are other verbs which have l, m, n, r or gh for second radical (cf. Sutcliffe, pp. 71, ff). These strong consonants are called liquid, and verbs with a liquid second radical display a morphological irregularity in their paradigm. Compare the verb 'qatel' in the table in (2) with 'zelaq' "he slipped". In the Perfect the two forms display the same structure, namely QvTvL, but in the Imperfect (and the forms in question realise the third person plural) 'qatel' has the structure jvQTLv while 'zelaq' has the structure jvQvTLv.



## 2. An anomaly in liquid verbs

<u>Perfect</u>	<u>Imperfect</u>
qat <sup>h</sup> el	joqtlu
zelaq	jizolqu

A third subclass of the first form strong verb is distinguished. This comprises verbs with the base form QvTT, ie. verbs in which the second radical is reduplicated, eg. 'mess' "he touched", 'garr' "he carried" (cf. Sutcliffe, pp. 123, ff.).

### 2.1.4 Vocalic sequences of strong first form verbs

In so-called 'standard Maltese' (of which my own speech can be considered a variant) the strong first form triradical verb in the Perfect can have six different vocalic sequences, set out in the table in (3):

## 3. Vocalic sequences

1. QiTeL	2. QeTaL	3. QaTaL
4. QaTeL	5. QeTeL	6. QoToL



Saydon (1958) examines this vocalisation to see whether it is possible to establish a correlation between vocalic sequences and semantic types, but the study turns out to be inconclusive in this respect (cf. also Sutcliffe pp. 73, ff.).

#### 2.1.5 Subclasses of weak first form verbs

As noted earlier (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.2) Sutcliffe treats verbs with gh for third radical with the class of weak verbs (cf. Sutcliffe, pp. 101, ff.). In the base form of such verbs the standard orthography replaces gh with an apostrophe, eg. qata' "he cut" but the gh reappears under certain conditions, as for instance when a pronominal suffix is added eg. qataghha "he cut her".

Verbs with a weak radical fall into three classes, all of them displaying particular patterns of morphological behaviour in their paradigms which deviate from the norm set by the regular strong verb.

The first class is made up of verbs with a weak first radical, eg. wasal "he arrived"; the second of verbs with a weak second radical, eg. sâm "he fasted", in which the weak radical disappears at least in the base form; and the third of verbs with a weak third radical, eg. mexa "he walked", which in the base form is distinguished from a verb with gh for third radical by the absence of the apostrophe (cf. Sutcliffe pp. 105, ff.).

There are also other subclasses of verbs termed 'irregular' for a variety of reasons (cf. Sutcliffe pp. 132, ff.).

#### 4. Classification of triliteral first form verbs

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 1. strong    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Regular, eg. <u>qatel</u> "he killed"</li> <li>b) Liquid 2nd radical, eg. <u>ẓelāq</u> "he slipped"</li> <li>c) Doubled 2nd radical, eg. <u>mess</u> "he touched"</li> </ul>   |
| 2. weak      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <u>gh</u> for 3rd radical, eg. <u>qata'</u> "he cut"</li> <li>b) weak 1st radical, eg. <u>wasal</u> "he arrived"</li> <li>c) weak 2nd radical, eg. <u>sām</u> "he fasted"</li> <li>d) weak 3rd radical, eg. <u>mexa</u> "he walked"</li> </ul> |
| 3. irregular |  |

The table in (4) sets out the various subclasses Sutcliffe distinguishes within the class of triliteral first form verbs.

#### 2.2 Verbal derivational morphology

For the purposes of illustration we will only be looking in this section at the derived forms of the strong verb.

### 2.2.1 The second form

According to Sutcliffe (pp. 81, ff.) the second form is derived from the first by the reduplication of the middle radical: "This reduplication gives a strength to the body of the word, which aptly denotes a strengthening or intensification of the meaning of the first, or simple, form." This intensification is the primary connotation of the second form, eg. kisser "to break to pieces" from kiser "to break". A secondary connotation is the causative, which the second form has taken over from the disused fourth form, eg. dahhal "to introduce, bring in" from dahal "to enter". Verbs of the second form may be derived not only from verbs, but also from nouns and adjectives. Denominative verbs, that is, verbs derived from nouns, may be said in general to signify a putting into action of the object signified by the noun from which they are derived, eg. habbar "to announce" from ahbar "news". Verbs derived from adjectives are causal, and denote the production of the quality signified by the adjective, eg. qassar "to shorten" from qasir "short". Here I simply register my disagreement with Sutcliffe about his attribution of primary status to the meaning of intensification. A full discussion is beyond the scope of this work but cf. ch. 3, § 1.5, where there is an attempt to make a case for assuming that it is the causative meaning which is primary for this form.

### 2.2.2 The third form

Of the third form Sutcliffe notes (pp. 86, ff.) that the idea of effort, which is characteristic of the third form in classical Arabic, has few traces in Maltese where it is for the most part reserved for verbs which have gh or the weak aspirate h (in many respects the status of this "consonant" is similar to that of gh, cf. ch. 1, § 2.1) and are therefore incapable of doubling that radical as is required for the second form. The loss of this reduplication is compensated for by the lengthening of the vowel of the first syllable, which is the characteristic of this form. The third form is, therefore, practically an extension of the second, and has the same meanings: gieghed "to place (lit. make to stand)" from qaghad "to stand" is a third form verb we will be looking at in later sections (cf. especially ch. 4, § 5).

### 2.2.3 The fourth form

For the fourth form Sutcliffe remarks: "The fourth, or causative, form [ie. in Arabic] is disused in Maltese, and its function has passed to the second form" (p. 86). I note in passing that this is but one instance of excessive concern with the Classical Arabic model of grammatical description in the classification of the Maltese verb (cf. ch. 1, § 2). There is no Maltese form corresponding to the Classical Arabic one, and the causative meaning

"has passed to the second form", yet both Sutcliffe and Cremona (as well as subsequent treatments) retain the tenfold classification of the verbal derivational morphology on the Arabic model, so that in effect the fourth form in Maltese is an empty class. This is not the worst effect by any means, since the tenfold classification actually obscures the nature of the semantic system underlying the derivational one. Indeed to my knowledge no one has yet attempted to study the semantics of the Maltese verbal derivational system as a system (Marshall 1968, for instance, is a study concerned completely with the traditional classification we are expounding here; cf. also ch. 3, §§ 1.4 and 1.5 of the present work, where a partial attempt is made to understand the semantics of the derivational morphology as a system).

#### 2.2.4 The fifth form

The fifth form is derived from the second by means of the prefix t-. According to Sutcliffe (pp. 86, ff.) it is primarily the reflexive of the second form eg. tkabbar "to grow proud" from kabbar "to enlarge"; but it is also used with passive force eg. tniżżel "to be brought down" from nizzel "to bring down". In his classification Sutcliffe also introduces a subclass headed 'Examples in which the subject is also the indirect reflexive' (p. 87), eg. ittallab "to beg" from talab "to ask", but no further

explanation is given. He also distinguishes a subclass of verbs in which the fifth form "is used... with effective force". And he says, "By effective force is meant that an effect is signified as produced on the subject but without indication whether the effect was produced by another agent or whether it was due to the subject itself eg. thallat "to get mixed up" from hallat "to mix up", tkisser "to break to pieces (intrans.)" from kisser "to break to pieces". Sutcliffe's other subclass is made up of verbs in which the fifth form denotes reciprocity, eg. tkellem "to converse" from kellem "to speak to", tghannaq "to embrace (reciprocally)" from ghannaq "to embrace". Sutcliffe also qualifies his classification : "The examples here given are not necessarily exclusive. According to the context one and the same word may have either a passive or an effective sense" (p. 88). And for the morphology he notes, "The servile letter t which is used as the prefix of this form, assimilates with the first letter of the verb when this is ċ, d, g, s, x, z, z" (p. 86).

#### 2.2.5 The sixth form

Analogously to the fifth form, the sixth form is derived from the third by means of the letter t prefixed to the latter (with the same pattern of assimilation as that noted for the fifth form). In sense the sixth form is properly the reflexive of the third eg. tbieghed "to

go to a distance" from bieghed "to remove afar", tmieghnek "to wallow" from mieghnek "to roll, tumble". It sometimes has passive force, eg. tbierrek "to be blessed" from bierrek "to bless", an effective force, eg. trieghed "to tremble" from rieghed "to make to tremble", and sometimes denotes reciprocal action, eg. issieheb "to associate together" from sieheb "to unite, associate". Note the assimilation of the prefix in this verb (cf. pp. 89, ff.).

#### 2.2.6 The seventh form

The seventh form is derived from the first by the addition of the prefix n-. Sutcliffe notes it is strictly speaking the reflexive of the first, eg. ndaħal "to interfere" from daħal "to enter (intrans.)", ndifen "to bury oneself" from difen "to bury", but is more commonly used with passive force eg. nħalaq "to be created" from ħalaq "to create" or with effective force eg. nfetah "to open (eg. a flower)" from fetah "to open", ngabar "to gather (intrans.)" from gabar "to gather (trans.)" (cf. pp. 91, ff.).

It is convenient to note at this stage, that with fifth, sixth and seventh form verbs, when the agent is specified, the expression referring to it is preceded by the preposition minn "from". This happens also with agents in certain syntactic constructions realizing a passive meaning (where classes of verbs other than the three just mentioned, eg. non Semitic verbs, besides verbs from other



derived forms, are involved). Furthermore in a large number of verbs traditionally classified as transitive (a subclass of which is formed of second form verbs), the expression referring to the entity affected by the meaning of the verb (roughly, the direct object) is in certain instances preceded by the preposition lil meaning roughly "to" (but cf. ch. 2; § 1.3 and § 2, where these matters are explored in some detail).

#### 2.2.7 The eighth form

For the eighth form Sutcliffe notes that like the seventh, it is also strictly speaking a reflexive form of the first, and it is formed by inserting the letter t after the first radical of the first form. He further notes, somewhat unclearly, that the reflexive pronoun involved in this form may be either the direct or the indirect and that in this it differs from the seventh, which never supposes the indirect reflexive. It differs from the seventh also in that it sometimes has reciprocal force, which is not found in the seventh. "But", he continues, "the indirect reflexive force is at times very weak, if it has not disappeared altogether [the reference apparently is to the English translation equivalent]. For example, it would be incorrect to translate xtara [the eighth form verb from a hypothetical first form base with a weak third radical] except by the simple verb "to buy",



or stâd [from a hypothetical base with second weak radical] except by the simple verb 'to fish'. He continues by noting that from the reflexive use is readily developed the effective and the passive use, both of which are found in the eighth form. He gives as heading for his list of examples 'Examples of the reflexive use including the effective' which does not help to make his meaning clearer, eg. ftaqar "to become poor" from faqar "poverty", ntebah "to perceive" from nebh "awakening". For examples of passive use he includes ntefaq "to be spent" from nefaq "to spend" among others, and he gives one example of reciprocal use : ftiehem "to be in agreement" from fehem "to understand" with the note that the eighth form is derived immediately from the third form fiehem "to explain, make someone understand" (cf. pp. 96, ff.).

#### 2.2.8 The ninth form

Of the ninth form Sutcliffe notes that it is used to express the acquisition of some colour or quality, which may be either desirable or not. I include the notion of the acquisition of colours or qualities, or indeed of states, under the term 'inchoative'. In the base form, ninth form verbs have only one vowel which is always long, eg. hmâr "to redden" from ahmar "red"; ċkien "to grow small" from ċkejken "small" (cf. pp. 98, ff.).

### 2.2.9 The tenth form

Sutcliffe says very little about the semantics of the tenth form. It is derived "by prefixing st- to the first form and throwing the vowel of the first radical back on to the prefix. In origin it appears to have been the reflexive of the fourth or causal form. There are few verbs in Maltese of this form with three strong radicals; examples are more numerous in the weak verbs" (p. 100). Among his examples he includes staghgeb "to be amazed" from ghageb "a marvel" and stkerrah "to loathe" from ikreh "ugly". Of the latter verb he says that it is derived from the second form, and means literally "to make ugly for oneself", and so "to consider hideous, to loathe".

## 5. Derived forms of the strong verb

1.	QvTvL	
2.	QvTTvL	intensive, causative, denominative
3.	QvTvL	" " "
4.	-	
5.	tQvTTvL	reflexive and passive of 2, effective, reciprocal
6.	tQvTvL	reflexive and passive of 3, reciprocal
7.	nQvTvL	reflexive and passive of 1, effective
8.	QtvTvL	reflexive of 1 (reciprocal)
9.	QTvL	inchoative
10.	stvQvTvL	?

The table in (5) summarises the presentation in § 2.2 for ease of reference, giving a model of each form and including the principal meanings Sutcliffe associates with each of them.

## 2.3 Nominal Derivational Morphology

In Maltese it is not only verbs which are derivationally related to other verbs or to other expressions of the language. Nouns too enter into derivational relationships. Sutcliffe (pp. 22, ff.) classifies nouns into two major classes on morphological grounds : they may be either simple or derived. Simple or primitive nouns are "those which are not formed from other words", eg. galb "heart", sema "heaven", xahar "month". Derived nouns, on the other hand, "are formed from other words, which may be either other nouns, or verbs, or adjectives". Derived nouns are further subdivided into three main classes.

### 2.3.1 Derived nouns of the first class

The consonants of the 'primitive word' from which nouns of the first subclass are derived, "remain unaltered, and the change takes place in the value and position of the vowels." Sutcliffe calls nouns belonging to this first subclass, abstract, and subdivides them further into three classes : first, nouns of substantival or adjectival origin eg. rgulîja "manliness" from raġel "man", xjuhîja "old age" from xih "aged"; second, nouns of colour and other abstracts eg. hmûra "redness" from ahmar "red", blûha "silliness" from ibleh "foolish"; and third, the subclass he calls verbal nouns : "These express the action denoted by the verb. They have no plurals" eg. qtîl "killing" from gatel

"to kill". And he continues, "From them are derived 'nouns of unity', which express a single performance of the action. These nouns of unity have regular plurals" eg. qatla "an act of killing, a murder" and its plural qatliet from qatel "to kill".

### 2.3.2 Derived nouns of the second class

For the second subclass of derived nouns, Sutcliffe notes that the principal change lies in the reduplication of the medial radical : "Characteristic words of the second class denote the pre-eminent possession of a certain quality, or the following of some trade or calling, eg. giddieb "liar" from gideb "to lie"; hajjât "tailor", from hât "to sew". This use admirably suits the nature of nouns of this class, as the reduplication of the radical gives a certain strength to the word that corresponds to a certain 'intensity' in the meaning. Words signifying trades may be said to have this intensity in that they denote the special and regular occupation of a person in a definite employment" (p. 22; but cf. ch. 1, § 4 and ch. 4, § 4 for some criticism of this statement).

### 2.3.3 Derived nouns of the third class

The third subclass of derived nouns is further subdivided into two main subclasses according to whether the consonant prefix that figures in their derivation is

m- or t-. The first group of nouns is called 'mimated' and Sutcliffe notes "they have various significations". They denote a place in which an action is performed eg. mahzen "store, magazine" from hazen "to store", and one mimated noun denotes the time in which the action is performed : Milied "Nativity (Christmas)" from wiled "to give birth to" (p. 26). Mimated nouns also denote the instrument eg. maghza "mattock" from ghazaq "to dig", muftieh "key" from fetah "to open". They may also have a collective sense eg. mizbla "dung-heap" from zibel "dung" or an abstract sense eg. mahfra "forgiveness" from hafer "to forgive", moghdrija "compassion" from ghader "to compassionate", migja "coming" from gie "to come".

Like the third subclass of the first class of derived nouns (cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.1) Sutcliffe calls nouns derived via the prefixing of t- 'verbal nouns'. The subclasses he distinguishes among this class (cf. pp. 146, ff.) are mostly based on morphological characteristics and we will not go into them here in detail except to underline what Sutcliffe says about their meaning : "There are two verbal nouns. That which denotes the action or state corresponding to the meaning of the verb, and the nomen unitatis derived from it, which denotes a single occurrence of the action or a single instance of the state in question" (p. 146; cf. also ch. 1, § 2.3.1). I also quote some of Sutcliffe's examples, trazzin "bridling" from the second form verb

raẓẓan "to bridle"; tmexxija "guidance" from the second form verb mexxa "to guide, lead"; for the verbal nouns of the fifth form, Sutcliffe says that they are distinguished "by their reflexive or reciprocal meaning" from the verbal nouns of the second form. No verbal nouns are given for the seventh and ninth forms (cf. p. 152).

#### 6. Classification of the noun

Simple or Primitive: qalb "heart", sema "heaven"

- a. Substantival/Adjectival origin : rgulija "manliness"  
xjuhiija "old age"
- b. Colour nouns, other abstracts : hmûra "redness"  
blûha "silliness"

Derived 1 (Abstract):

- i. Action denoted by the verb, no plural : qtîl "killing"
- ii. Noun of unity (single performance) : qatla/-iet "an act of killing"

Derived 2: Possession of a certain quality, following of some trade or calling.  
Reduplication of the medial radical : giddieb "liar", hajjat "tailor"

- i. Place : mahzen "store"
- ii. Time : Milied "Nativity, Christmas"
- iii. Instrument : maghzqa "mattock"
- iv. Collective : mizbla "dung-heap"
- v. Abstract : moghdiriija "compassion"

Derived 3:

- i. Action denoted by the verb, no plural : taghlim "instruction"
- ii. Noun of unity (single performance) : taghlîma/-iet "lesson"



The table in (6) presents in summary form the remarks about the classification of the noun set out in § 2.3.

#### 2.3.4 Classification of nouns according to content

Besides the classification of nouns in terms of their derivational morphology, Sutcliffe also has a section entitled 'Division of Nouns according to Content' (cf. pp. 29, ff.), and here he establishes six subclasses of nouns : "(1) a collective noun or noun of material; (2) a *nomen unitatis*, ie. a noun expressing one of the individuals that make up the content of the collective noun, or a definite quantity of the material expressed by the collective noun; (3) a plural noun, which is the plural of the noun of unity and is applicable to a definite number of such individuals or definite quantities; (4) a dual noun denoting two of a kind; (5) a diminutive noun denoting a small specimen of the group designated by the collective noun, or small quantity of the substance designated by the noun of material; and (6) lastly a plural applicable to an indefinite number of such individuals or quantities. The two types of plural are called respectively definite plurals and indefinite plurals" (pp. 29-30) and then he adds, "No noun is capable of all these different forms". In exemplifying his classes, Sutcliffe treats the first three subclasses together : as examples of nouns of material with their nouns of unity, he gives, for instance : hadid "iron", hadida "a piece of iron" (the noun of unity) and

hadidiet "pieces of iron" (the definite plural); ramel "sand", ramla "a grain of sand" and ramliet "grains of sand"; and xaham "fat", xahma "a piece of fat", xahmiet "pieces of fat". As examples of collective nouns he gives for instance : baqar "cattle", baqra "a cow", baqriet "cows"; kliem "words", kelma "a word", kelmiet "words"; sigar "trees", sigra "a tree", sigriet "trees".

Notice that both the noun of unity of the noun of material and of the collective noun end in the suffix -a, while the definite plural ends in -iet. Note also that the verbal nouns in the first class of derived nouns (cf. § 2.3.1, pp. 13-14) share the same suffixes, namely qatla "an act of killing" and qatliet, its definite plural, while the verbal noun qtîl "killing" (which "expresses the action denoted by the verb" and has no plural) doesn't have a suffix at all, just as in the case of the noun of material (eg. hadid "iron" and the collective noun, eg. baqar "cattle").

Sutcliffe's fourth and fifth subclasses (the dual and the diminutive) are not directly relevant for our purposes; also they are relatively restricted in occurrence. For the dual, Sutcliffe remarks that it "is the form of the noun used to denote two things of the same kind" (p. 34) and is formed by suffixing -éjn or -ajn, eg. elf "thousand", elfejn "two thousand"; jum "day", jumejn "two days". However many nouns which Sutcliffe classifies as dual,

simply have the same ending as that found in genuinely dual nouns, but their meaning is plural eg. id "hand", idejn "hands" (cf. the expressions zewg idejn "two hands", hames idejn "five hands"; cf. also Borg 1978, § 7.4.5 and Fenech, 1978 b).

In his treatment of diminutive nouns, Sutcliffe also includes diminutive adjectives (cf. pp. 31, ff.) : "The diminutives from nouns signify that the person, animal, or thing in question is small. Those from adjectives signify properly the possession of the quality expressed by the adjective in a restricted degree. They may also be used, however, without this their proper connotation, to signify a sentiment of love or affection." Examples are tfajjel "small boy" from tifel "boy", xtajta "little shore" from xatt "shore", fqajjar "poor, miserable" from fqir "poor".

In treating his sixth class (indefinite, or as he calls these nouns later, indeterminate, plurals) Sutcliffe also brings in the collective and the determinate plural : "The determinate plural is used with the numbers 2 (if there is no dual) to 10, and of things precisely determined. The indeterminate plural is used of things belonging to a certain class taken in general. The use of the collective noun is very similar. But strictly understood the collective denotes a number of things considered as a class, whereas the indeterminate plural denotes them as the

individuals of a class. Collectives used strictly in their collective sense take their verb in the singular. In practice collective nouns are also used, as in English, to denote primarily the members of the class. In this case they are almost assimilated to plurals " (Sutcliffe, p. 36). I will have more to say about these observations in a later section (cf. ch. 4, § 2) but in the meantime I will note the following points. First, Sutcliffe remarks that some nouns have both forms of plural, eg. ċarruta "a rag" (singular), ċarrutiet (Determinate plural), ċraret (Indeterminate plural); toqba "a hole", toqbiet, toqob; ġidra "a turnip", ġidriet, ġdur. Secondly he notes that "those nouns which have one plural only use this form in all cases without distinction of meaning". Finally, Sutcliffe gives only two examples of a noun which has both a collective and an indeterminate plural : hajt "thread", qamh "wheat, corn" (collective); hajta "a piece of thread", qamha "a grain of wheat" (noun of unity); hajtiet, qamhiet (determinate plural) and hġût, qmûh (indeterminate plural) (p. 30).

With reference to the plural formations notice that in the examples given in the preceding paragraph, the determinate plurals are formed via the addition of a suffix, whereas the indeterminate plurals involve a restructuring of the base form. Traditionally, the former type is called the sound, or external plural, while the latter is called the broken plural. Of the sound plurals, Sutcliffe

notes that "they are formed by the addition to the singular of one of the terminations -în, -ât or -iet, -ijiet, -ân or -ien, -a. What internal change may take place in the word is consequent on the addition of one of these syllables, and is not in itself a change the function of which is to denote the plural" (pp. 37-38). Of the broken plurals he notes that "there is a considerable number of different forms... it is not possible to lay down any general rule as to the use of these forms" (pp. 41-42).

### 2.3.5 Gender

For the gender of nouns Sutcliffe notes (p. 49) that nouns are masculine except those which denote women eg. oht "sister", omm "mother"; those which end in -a eg. dahla "inlet" (but there are a few masculine nouns which end in -a, eg. Alla "God"); and a certain number of others, many of which relate to the body, eg. id "hand", qalb "heart", triq "road".

Sutcliffe further notes that the feminine of nouns is formed in the same way as the feminine of adjectives by the addition of the feminine termination -a, eg. armel "widower", armla "widow"; kelb "dog", kelba "bitch"; tifel "boy", tifla "girl". He also gives examples of irregular formation, eg. hu "brother", oht "sister"; iben "son", bint "daughter"; and of suppletive pairs, eg. ragel "man", mara "woman"; missier "father", omm "mother".

## 2.4 Adjectives

Adjectives have already been mentioned in connection with diminutive nouns (cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.4) and with the formation of feminine nouns (cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.5, above). Sutcliffe also treats nouns and adjectives together in talking about the formation of the plural (cf. Sutcliffe, pp. 36, ff.).

In the section dedicated to adjectival types (pp. 56, ff.), Sutcliffe establishes many subclasses on morphological criteria. Here I will mention only a few, which are relevant to my purposes, and to which reference will be made later.

One subclass includes for instance marid "sick" (marad, a first form verb, "to become sick"), nadif "clean" (ndâf, a ninth form verb, "to become clean"), qadim "ancient" (qdiem, a ninth form verb, "to become ancient").

Some adjectives are derived from nouns by the addition of the suffix -i, eg. sajfi "belonging to summer" from sajf "summer", rahli "countrified" from rahal "village", ramli "sandy" from ramel "sand".

Other adjectives fall into one morphological subgroup, eg. biered "cold" (bired "to become cold, lukewarm"), niedem "penitent" (nidem "to repent"), sieket "silent" (siket "to become silent").

Yet other adjectives are formed by the reduplication



of the medial radical, eg. ferrieh "merry" (ferah "to rejoice", bezziegh "timorous" (beza' "to become frightened, be afraid", a first form verb with gh for third radical, cf. ch. 1, §§ 2.1.2 and 2.1.5). Of this subclass Sutcliffe remarks (p. 57): "The reduplication of the medial radical gives an intensive sense, eg. ferrieh "merry"... or a causative sense, eg. mewwiet "deadly" (miet "to die", a first form verb with weak middle radical, cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.5). He notes also that many of these adjectives may also have a final suffix -i (cf. above), eg. bezzieghi "timorous", mewwieti "deadly".

Finally, of interest to us is a subclass of adjectives which are formed by the addition of the suffix -ân or -ien eg. dahkân "smiling" (dahak "to smile"), ferhân "cheerful" (ferah "to rejoice").

For gender and number in connection with adjectives Sutcliffe notes that in the singular adjectives have distinct forms for masculine and feminine, while in the plural the same form is used for both genders (p. 36). For the formation of the feminine adjective he notes that the general rule is that the feminine is formed from the masculine by the addition of the suffix -a, eg. hieles "safe", hielsa (feminine); xhih "covetous", xhîha (fem.) (p. 59). But he also notes: "Adjectives of the class signifying colours and certain qualities, mostly defects, in forming their feminines by the addition of final -a,

drop the initial vowel and place the second vowel of the masculine form between the first and second radicals, eg. ahmar "red", hamra (fem.); ahrax "fierce", harxa (fem.)" (pp. 59-60).

However in his section 'Syntax of the Adjective', Sutcliffe makes some important remarks, relevant to the question of adjectival gender and number : "Adjectives agree with nouns in the singular both in gender and number. As regards nouns in the plural, adjectives may agree with them in number but there are not separate forms in the plural for masculine and feminine. Moreover, nouns in the plural may be, and very frequently are, accompanied by an adjective in the feminine singular. Indeed so common is this construction that the feminine singular form has come to be regarded as also a plural form" (p. 63).

## 2.5 Participles

In his introduction to the derived forms of the verb, Sutcliffe notes : "The normal complement of each Form consists of (1) two moods, the indicative and the imperative; (2) a participle or participles, present and past; (3) a verbal noun with its corresponding noun of unity" (p. 66).

It is to the forms Sutcliffe includes under the title 'participles' that we now turn our attention.



### 2.5.1 The present participle

Of the present participle he says "Comparatively little use is made in Maltese of the present participle, with the result that in many verbs... it has fallen into disuse" (p. 69. Cf. however, ch. 4, § 4 for some criticism of this view). Examples of so-called present participles would be hiereg "going out (masc. sing.)" (hareg "to go out"); riesaq "approaching" (resaq "to come near"); rieged "sleeping" (raqad "to sleep").

### 2.5.2 The past participle

Sutcliffe establishes several subclasses of past participles on morphological grounds (pp. 140, ff.) but they all have in common the prefix m-, whether they correspond to verbs of the first, or other derived forms : eg. minfud "transfixed" from nifed "to pierce"; mehlus "freed" from heles "to free"; msallab "crossed, crucified" from the second form verb sallab "to cross, crucify"; mbierek "blessed" from the third form verb bierek "to bless"; missellef "borrowed" from the fifth form verb ssellef "to borrow" (note the assimilation of the prefix t- occurring before the second form verb sellef "to lend", cf. ch. 1, § 2.2.4); mistieden "invited" from the tenth form verb stieden "to invite".

For the VII and IX Forms, however, Sutcliffe remarks

that they "would not be expected to have past participles, the former because of its passive and reflexive meanings, the latter because all its verbs are intransitive" (Sutcliffe, p. 144; cf. however, ch. 4, § 4 for some criticism).

## 2.6 The quadriliteral verb

The quadriliteral verb, as the name itself implies, has four consonant radicals in its base form. Sutcliffe distinguishes two subclasses. The first is made up of verbs "formed by the repetition of a diradical root. Such are mostly onomatopoeic, such as gemgem "to grumble", zanzan "to hum, buzz"; others are iterative, as petpet "to blink", dardar "to stir, thicken by stirring" (p. 127).

The second subclass is further subdivided into two groups : "Those with dissimilar syllables have been formed in various ways. Some with iterative force repeat the third radical, as gerbeb "to roll", or the first radical may be repeated after the second, as zerzaq "to slide". Others have been formed from words with three radical letters by the insertion or addition of another consonant, often l, n or r, eg. harbat "to spoil, ruin" from habat "to beat" (p. 127). But for this latter group Sutcliffe (cf. also Serracino Inglott, 1966) has to rely mostly on etymology.

Quadriliteral verbs have both a Perfect and Imperfect

form, eg. ċaqḷaq "to shake" (Perfect) and iċċaqḷaq (Imperfect), an Imperative ċaqḷaq (second person singular) and ċaqḷaqu (second person plural), a past participle mċaqḷaq, and a verbal noun ċaqḷiq, with its noun of unity ċaqḷiqa and its plural ċaqḷiqiet.

Quadriliteral verbs have only one derived form, characterized by the prefix t- : eg. harbat "to spoil, ruin", tharbat "to be destroyed, ruined". For the meaning of this derived form, Sutcliffe notes that it has "sometimes a passive meaning, rarely a reflexive meaning and sometimes a neuter meaning, which is an extension of the passive or reflexive use [by 'neuter' Sutcliffe presumably means 'impersonal' or 'agentless']" (p. 130).

Derived quadriliteral verbs, besides a Perfect and an Imperfect, also have an Imperative and a verbal noun with its noun of unity, eg. tqarben "he took communion", tqarbin (verbal noun, "communion"), tqarbina (noun of unity).

## 2.7 Mood and Voice

As noted in 2.5 the verb inflects for the imperative mood: eg. from gatel "to kill", oqtol (Imperative second person singular) and oqtlu (second person plural).

As regards voice, Sutcliffe remarks (p. 71) : "There is in Maltese no passive voice properly so called. Its place is supplied in part by the derived forms V, VI, VII

and VIII, and by the auxiliary kien, ikun used in combination with the past participle. Thus kien maqtul "he was killed"... The verb gie, jigi "to come" is similarly used; eg. gie maqtul "he was killed"... (cf. ch. 3, § 1.3, for some remarks about these constructions).

### 3. The localist hypothesis

Now that some idea of the derivational morphology can be assumed, some of the notions on which the work is based can be introduced. While casting around in search of a theoretical framework within which to conduct my study of aspect and character, I was struck by the occurrence, in certain syntactic constructions, of prepositions denoting movement (cf. ch. 1, § 2.2.6 where attention is drawn to the preposition minn "from" which also precedes the expression referring to the agent in certain constructions, and the preposition lil "to" which precedes certain direct objects), as well as by the occurrence of the verb gie "he came" in a passive construction (cf. ch. 1, § 2.7). There was also the occurrence of the present participle of the locative verb qaghad "he was located" in certain aspectually modified constructions (cf. ch. 1, § 1) as well as the present participle of the verb mar "he went" in a construction expressing futurity (which we will be looking at in ch. 5, § 4), besides other phenomena which we will not be going into in the present study : among these I

mention the occurrence of the preposition minn "from" in constructions expressing the comparative, the existence of prepositions signifying both a locational and a temporal relation, eg. wara "behind, after" and a construction with yet another preposition signifying a locational relation, ghand "at", to express possession.

These considerations, together with the intuitive appeal of the localist hypothesis (which, with reference to the controversy over innateness in linguistics, I find at least more plausible than the postulation of innate language-specific categories) led me to choose a localistic framework within which to conduct my study.

Localism, according to one definition (cf. Lyons 1977, § 15.7; cf. also Anderson 1977, § 2.4) is the hypothesis "that spatial expressions are more basic, grammatically and semantically, than various kinds of non-spatial expressions... Spatial expressions are linguistically more basic, according to the localists, in that they serve as structural templates, as it were, for other expressions; and the reason why this should be so, it is plausibly suggested by psychologists, is that spatial organization is of central importance in human cognition".

In chapter two, I study a verb which encodes concrete movement (cf. ch. 2, § 1) as one instance of a "structural template" (in the above quotation), and from this, following

Jessen (1974), I abstract the localistic notion of a journey, which I then use in my study of aspect in chapter three. Implicit in this approach is the tendency to maximise polysemy in preference to homonymy (cf. Lyons 1977, § 13.4) or as Anderson puts it (1977, § 1.10.2) other things being equal "accounts which assign a unitary source to a particular lexical form will be preferred to those which require homonymy".

Jessen also makes use of the notion of a journey (and the related notion of a border-crossing, cf. ch. 2, § 1.1) to characterize what she calls the 'proposition type' (which may be understood to include 'aspectual character'). In this study I am principally concerned with a verb from one character type, mexa "he walked", which I can now characterize as encoding an extended journey (cf. ch. 2, § 1, for the qualification 'extended'). Still in a later section of this work (ch. 3, § 1.5) I touch upon the question of a classification of verbs in terms of their character, which is why I briefly consider the notion of a border-crossing in ch. 2, § 1.1, but the notion is also useful in my discussion of four directional prepositions in ch. 2, § 1.4.

The notion of a journey however, is itself a complex one. So in order to hint at its composition and also to be in a position to conduct certain aspects of the discussion which follows (eg., the discussion in ch. 3), it will be



convenient to operate with a set of two semantic roles, which I derive from the localist stance : these are a location role and a traveller role. Informally, for our purposes, the two roles can be spatially related to each other in the following three ways (without exhausting the possibilities) : either there is no distance separating the location and the traveller, in which case we have a locational relation between the two; or there is distance separating the two. In this case, if the traveller is in motion there are two possibilities : either the distance between the location and the traveller is increasing, in which case the location can be understood as a source (of movement), or the distance is decreasing, in which case the location can be understood as a goal (of movement). In practice, however, in much of what follows, I will be talking simply of a source or goal role.

In the paradigm instance the traveller role is fulfilled by an entity, but it can also be fulfilled by an abstract noun such as 'causation' (I will not attempt to justify this extension of the traveller role : I note only that I have found it useful in dealing with my data, cf. especially ch. 3, § 1.1).

The complex notion of a journey therefore, can be seen to involve at least the movement of a traveller from a source location to a goal location (for a formal characterization of extended journeys and border-crossings cf. Jessen 1974, chapter 7).

I also follow Anderson (1977) in allowing a single nominal (cf. ch. 4, § 3 for the use of this term) to be associated in underlying structure with more than one role.

Apart from the theoretical interest of indicating the possible relevance of a localistic approach (and more specifically of the notion of a journey) to the analysis of a particular language, my aim in this study has been to attempt to say something interesting about aspects of the semantic structure of Maltese, chiefly by an examination of some of the (surface) morphology and syntax. For this reason I wanted my discussion to be as neutral as possible with respect to current alternative conceptions of grammatical and semantic models of linguistic description. When I mention semantic structures therefore I talk of them merely as being associated with (or, corresponding to, etc.) certain lexical forms. In the same vein, the graphic representations and figures I make use of in the course of my discussion are intended simply as an aid to the exposition and are not to be understood as an attempt at formalisation.

#### 4. Structure of the work

Chapter five studies the aspectual distinctions manifest in the oppositions mexa (Perfect), jimxi (Imperfect), miexi (Present participle) and qed jimxi (Imperfect preceded by the Present participle of qagħad "he was



located") as hinted at in § 1 of this chapter. However the status of the present participle is unclear and so chapter four addresses itself to this problem. Such an attempt involves a number of steps.

Except within the context of predication (cf. ch. 1, § 5 and ch. 4, § 3) it is only the so-called present participle which can occur instead of the Perfect or Imperfect form of the verb (cf. also ch. 1, § 1). The so-called past participle (ie. a form like mmexxi, cf. ch. 1, § 2.5.2) cannot occur in a similar position. This raises the question whether the two forms should be classed together as participles (at least on syntactic grounds, since morphologically they display similar behaviour : cf. ch. 4, § 4). Now Sutcliffe is not very explicit in his assignment of specific participial forms to a particular derived form of the verb (cf. the quotation in ch. 1, § 2.5 and Sutcliffe pp. 144, ff.) but it seems that a form like mmexxi is associated with the second form verb mexxa (apparently on morphological grounds : note the reduplication of the second radical common to both forms).

'mmexxi' means something like 'being led' or 'being walked' and with respect to its meaning therefore it is more readily associated with the fifth form verb tmexxa (cf. ch. 1, §§ 2.2.1 and 2.2.4 respectively, for the meaning of these derived forms). Anticipating the discussion in chapter three, I will refer to the second form verb 'mexxa' as

the causative, and the fifth form verb 'tmexxa' as the passive causative. The first form verb 'mexa' I will call the reflexive causative. I agree with Sutcliffe in his assignment of miexi (the form he calls the present participle) to the reflexive causative 'mexa' "he walked". However this analysis still leaves us with a gap, as can be seen

## 7. Assignment of Participles

reflexive causative	'mexa'	present participle	'miexi'
causative	'mexxa'	—	
passive causative	'tmexxa'	past participle	'mmexxi'

from the table in (7). In Sutcliffe's analysis, the gap lies in the passive causative slot; in mine, at this stage of the discussion, it lies in the causative one.

Besides participial forms however, there are also nouns (and derived nouns, cf. ch. 1, § 2.3) associated with the root common to the set of verbs and participles we have mentioned so far (to avoid having to speak of nouns and derived nouns, I employ the term nominalisation in the sense of the derivation of noun forms from a consonantal root (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.2), via a morphological process). We will be looking closer later at the meaning of these nominalizations (cf. ch. 4, § 2), but for the moment

## 8. Assignment of nouns

reflexive causative	'mexa'	'mixja/-iet', 'mixi'
causative	'mexxa'	} 'tmexxiija'
passive causative	'tmexxa'	

notice that in the table in (8) there is no gap such as we observed for that in (7).

Now observe that Sutcliffe's second class of derived nouns (ch. 1, § 2.3.2) has the Structure QvTT $\hat{V}$ L and denotes "the pre-eminent possession of a certain quality...". But this is also the structure of one of his subclasses of adjectives (ch. 1, § 2.4), with the reduplication of the medial radical. Now Maltese has a form associated with the root MXJ (the root common to all the forms we have mentioned above, with the base form mexa, classified as a weak first form verb with a weak third radical) and displaying a structure equivalent to QvTT $\hat{V}$ L, namely mexxej. Moreover this form displays syntactic behaviour which cannot be unambiguously interpreted as that of a noun : it can also function as an adjective (cf. ch. 4, § 4). The meaning of this form is "leader" (ie. one who leads or makes somebody walk) and in its adjectival function it means something like "smooth or easy flowing" (which can be reconciled with the intensive meaning of the second form

verb, just as the nominal sense is patently causative : again, cf. ch. 4, § 4; for some remarks about the intensive cf. ch. 3, § 1.5). On this basis I assign

#### 9. Re-assignment of forms

	verb	nominalization	adjectivalization
reflexive causative	<u>mexa</u>	<u>mixja</u> , <u>mixi</u>	<u>miexi</u>
causative	<u>mexxa</u>	} <u>tmexxi</u> <u>ja</u>	<u>mexxej</u>
passive causative	<u>tmexxa</u>		<u>mmexxi</u>

the form mexxej to the causative slot which appears as a gap in the table in (7), so that semantically, symmetry can now be seen to obtain as in the table in (9). Note that in this table I do away with the term participle and use instead 'adjectivalization' (analogously to 'nominalization', in the sense of the derivation of an adjective form via a morphological process : cf. ch. 4, § 4). The use of such a term however has to be justified, the more so in view of the disparate syntactic behaviour of the members in this class.

First of all, therefore, I attempt to obtain an elementary notion of the semantics involved in the opposition reflexive causative / causative / passive causative,

and this is done in chapter three. Such a study however has a bearing on the tenfold classification of the verb we looked at in ch. 1, § 2.2, and so in ch. 3, § 1.5 I attempt a partial reclassification of the derived forms of the verb in semantic terms and in relation to the notion of thematic structure.

This still leaves the problem of the syntactic disparity of the forms now labelled adjectivalizations. Chapter three deals with the set of three derivationally related verbal lexemes; and ch. 4, § 2 deals with the nominalizations associated with them. Up to this point however the categories verb and noun are simply assumed, so in ch. 4, § 3, I examine some of the morphological and syntactic criteria on the basis of which these two categories are set up as the principal parts-of-speech. Then in ch. 4, § 4 the morphological and some of the syntactic behaviour of the three adjectivalizations is examined : the passive causative adjectivalization (mmexxi) emerges as most adjective-like, the causative adjectivalization (mexxej) as most noun-like and the reflexive causative adjectivalization (miexi) as most verb-like. This makes the occurrence of the form miexi, in a position usually occupied by a finite form of the verb, more understandable. The semantics of the derivationally-related verbal lexemes, uncovered in chapter three, also squares with the disparity in the behaviour of these forms (cf. ch. 4, § 4). In

effect the category 'adjective' is set up as an intermediate one between 'noun' and 'verb', and the members in one of its subclasses (ie. the subclass I am calling 'adjectivalization') are strung out in a cline between the two extremes, with the passive causative (mmexxi) in the centre, the causative (mexxej) nearer the category noun, and the reflexive causative (miexi) nearer the category verb.

In chapter four, § 1, I anticipate somewhat my discussion of aspect, to which chapter five is devoted. I do this to prepare the way for my discussion of the nominalizations in ch. 4, § 2 and of the distinction in ch. 4, § 3 between nouns and verbs, since in the course of my work on aspect in terms of the notion of a journey, I unearth an important characteristic shared by both nouns and verbs, and which has hitherto gone unnoticed in all treatments of Maltese I know of, to date : both parts-of-speech exhibit an aspectual distinction.

It was noted in chapter one, § 2.2.6, that in certain cases the preposition lil "to" occurs before the direct object of a transitive verb. Now verbs of the second form make up an appreciable subclass of transitive verbs, and since, unfortunately, earlier treatments either dismiss the problem of the occurrence of lil or at best give it peripheral treatment (cf. ch. 2, § 1.3 for a review) it seemed appropriate to attempt to understand something of

the phenomenon. I prepare for this attempt in ch. 2, § 1.4, by trying to arrive at some characterisation of the meaning of the preposition 'lil', chiefly by contrasting it with three other directional prepositions. In ch. 2, § 2 I attempt a solution of the distribution of 'lil' by invoking the distinction between first and second order entities (cf. Lyons 1977, § 11.3). Briefly, individual persons, animals and other more or less discrete physical objects are termed first-order entities and at any point in time, they are located, at least perceptually, in three-dimensional space. On the other hand events, processes, states-of-affairs, etc. which are located in time, are termed second-order entities. The problem seemed worth dwelling upon, not only because of its intrinsic interest, but also because it seems relevant to other areas of the language. It has certain correlations, for instance, with definiteness and this is briefly explored in ch. 2, § 2.4. Also one verbal lexeme is used typically to predicate location (in space) of a first-order entity and another to predicate location (in time) of a second-order entity (cf. ch. 2, § 2). Similarly Maltese has two verbs of causing, one used with a first-order entity (as direct object), the other with a second-order entity (cf. ch. 3, § 3.1).

Chapter two opens with a consideration of a concrete journey (of walking) in § 1, and of the related notion of



a border-crossing (§ 1.1). This serves to introduce the discussion of the source preposition 'minn' (cf. § 1.2, where a problem in connection with an aspect of its meaning is left largely unsolved) as well as the discussion of the goal prepositions (§ 1.4) which I make use of in my study of the distinction between first and second order entities.

I draw upon my consideration of the journey paradigm not only in my study of aspectual distinctions in chapter five (and in its anticipation in ch. 4, § 1), but also in a brief look at the verb of (physical) location 'qagħad' (ch. 4, § 5) which is interpreted as an abstract journey (in time) of location, and with which chapter four closes.

## 5. Some grammatical notes

This section brings together a few remarks about Maltese grammar which will come in useful for an understanding of the examples I make use of in later chapters. As far as possible I again make use of Sutcliffe's work, but where I have had to fill in some gaps myself, I do so only tentatively, and in any case, in a very fragmentary and incomplete way, given the state of the research on the questions I touch upon here.





### 5.1 The definite article

To begin with, Maltese has only one article, the definite, and it has the graphic form il-, eg. qalb "heart", il-qalb "the heart". Sutcliffe (p. 18) calls the vowel preceding l 'prosthetic': it is not required when the article defines a word/<sup>with</sup> an initial vowel, eg. l-omm "the mother", or when the word preceding the article ends in a vowel, as in the sentence in (10). When the

10. Ara                                      l-        karozza!  
see (imperative, sg.) the car  
"Watch out, the car!"

word which is defined has initial ċ, d, n, r, s, t, x, z or z, the article is assimilated to it, eg. dar "house", id-dar "the house". Finally in this connection, Sutcliffe notes : "Words beginning with two consonants may take a prosthetic vowel, and consequently the article does not necessarily assimilate even when the word has for its initial letter one of the consonants enumerated above", eg. skola "school", l-iskola "the school" (compare sema "heaven", is-sema "the heaven").

For our limited purposes here, I note also that when certain prepositions occur before the article they are treated as proclitic by the orthography, eg. fi "in", fid-dar "in the house". With the preposition minn "from" assimilation also takes place to the following article

eg. l-iskola "the school", mill-iskola "from the school" and id-dar "the house", mid-dar "from the house".

## 5.2 Word Order

As we saw earlier (cf. § 2.1.1) any verbal lexeme in Maltese is realised by a form inflected for person and number (and gender), and the presence of another form realising the subject is optional. This gives great freedom in word-order possibilities. Of course there is more than one factor at work here, and to study the variables involved would require a full-length work. In chapter three, § 1.4 I note some interaction of word order and thematic structure, but this is largely bound up with the derivational morphology. However information structure probably plays an important role in determining a particular (surface) order.

In the course of my work, I have come across some evidence which would seem to suggest that, at least with certain verb lexemes, the initial position is that of the 'patient' (or in syntactic terms, roughly the direct object : cf. ch. 3, §§ 1.3, 1.4) but that the relative positions of the expressions encoding the agent (that is, the subject) and the activity involved (that is, the verb) depends on the information structure. However it would take too long to support this statement even by mere exemplification, and for present purposes, I assume with Sutcliffe (p. 210) the (surface) order (S)V(O).

### 5.3 About adjectives

For the attributive adjective, Sutcliffe notes (p. 63) that the normal position is following the noun modified, as in (11) (for agreement between nouns and adjectives,

11. mejda sabiḥa  
 table beautiful (fem. sg.)  
 "a beautiful table"

cf. the concluding paragraph in ch. 1, § 2.4). However he notes further that "an attributive adjective in agreement with a noun which is accompanied by the definite article itself takes the article only if the article is used with the noun to specify a particular object and moreover the adjective helps to identify the object named", eg.

12. a. ḡibli            l- ktieb il- ḡdid  
          bring to me the book the new  
          "Bring me the new book"
- b. il- baḥar l- iswed  
          the sea the black  
          "the Black Sea"

And he continues, "the article does not accompany the adjective if this is merely descriptive and does not help to distinguish the object named from others of its kind", eg.

13. a. Ix- xitwa qawwija ta' dawk l- inhawi  
 the winter strong of those the sides  
 "The severe winter of those regions"

b. Dawk id- djar sbieh inbnew  
 those the houses beautiful they were built  
 "Those beautiful houses were built"

fi žmienna  
 in time-our  
 in our time"

"Moreover, the article does not accompany the adjective when the noun with its article does not signify a particular object, but has a generic sense", eg.

14. Il- qalb iebsa ma taghder xejn  
 the heart hard(f) neg. she compassionates nothing  
 "A hard heart feels no compassion"

(For the negative in (14) cf. below, §5.5)

#### 5.4 Predicative structures

In chapter four I touch upon the question of predicative structures in Maltese (cf. §§ 3, 4) and it will be convenient to include a brief consideration of them here.

In equative predications (the classification I adopt here follows Lyons' treatment : 1977, § 12.2), the two

expressions are simply juxtaposed (with an appropriate intonation pattern) as in (15), so that normally no form

15. a. Ġanni t- tabib  
           John the doctor  
           "John is the doctor"
- b. It- tfal il- hallelin  
           the children the thieves  
           "The children are the thieves"

corresponds to the copula in English. Similarly in ascriptive predications the subject of the predication is followed by its complement without any intervening form as in (16). Simple juxtaposition is also usually

16. It- tifel marid  
           the boy sick  
           "The boy is sick"

the norm for predications of location.

17. It- tifel fil- ġnien  
           the boy in the garden  
           "The boy is in the garden"

Under certain conditions however (probably having to do with information structure and especially emphasis) a form does turn up between the juxtaposed expressions. In the case of equative predications it would be the

corresponding personal pronoun, as in (18):

18. a. Ġanni hu t- tabib

John he the doctor

"John is the one who is the doctor"

b. It- tfal huma l- hallelin

the children they the thieves

"The children are the ones who are the thieves"

However in the case of the ascriptive predication, the interposition of the personal pronoun sounds highly odd to me. In predications of location, the form which turns up is the present participle of the verb of location 'qaghad' (cf. ch. 1, § 1 and § 2.5.1). We will be taking a closer look at these predications of location in chapter four, § 5.

### 5.5 The negative

For the negative, Sutcliffe notes (p. 197-8) that with verbs it "is expressed, as in French, by two elements, the one preceding and the other following the verb" eg. hareġ "he went out", ma harigx "he did not go out". He also notes that the form mhux is "used to negative parts of speech other than the verb" and he analyses the form as "a compound word containing the verbal negative ma... x and the pronoun hu used as the verbal copula. The word thus really means "it is not".

## 5.6 Pronominal affixation

For our purposes all we need note here is that pronominal suffixes can be affixed to both verbs and prepositions (and to certain subclasses of nouns in certain cases). However cf. ch. 2, § 2.6 for a closer look at some of the

19. a. Ġanni ra      d-    dramm  
        John he saw the play  
        "John saw the play"
- b. Ġanni rah  
        John he saw him  
        "John saw it"

problems involved in pronominalization. The pronominalised version of (19a) is (19b) with the third person singular masculine pronoun suffixed to the verb (this particular pronoun has more than one realization, but these will be pointed out as they occur in the text). The sentences in (20) exemplify

20. a. It- tifel fuq il- mejda  
        the boy    on    the table  
        "The boy is (standing) on the table"
- b. It- tifel fuqha  
        the boy    on her  
        "The boy is (standing) on it"

the suffixation of a pronoun to a preposition. In the

case of an indirect object, this can also be pronominalised and suffixed to the verb. When this happens the preposition lil which occurs before the indirect object is

21. a. Ġanni baghat il- fjuri lil ommu  
 John he sent the flowers to mother-his  
 "John sent the flowers to his mother"
- b. Ġanni baghat hom l ha  
 John he sent them to her  
 "John sent them to her"
- c. Ġanni baghat hom lil ommu  
 John he sent them to mother-his  
 "John sent them to his mother"
- d. Ġanni baghat il ha l- fjuri  
 John he sent to her the flowers  
 "John sent her the flowers"

abbreviated to (i)l and suffixed along with the pronoun , as can be seen from the examples in (21). These sentences exemplify double pronominalization (21b), pronominalization of the direct object only (21c) and pronominalization of the indirect object only (21d).



## CHAPTER TWO

## 1. The Journey Paradigm

As hinted at in chapter one, §§ 3 and 4, the localistic notion of a journey plays an important part in this work. In this section I want to study a sentence encoding concrete movement from one point to another, observing the expressions which occur in it, as well as the semantic roles it encodes. In the sentence in (1) the preposition appearing before

1. Ġanni mexa            mid-            dar    sa l- iskola  
      John   he walked from the house to the school  
      "John walked from home to school"

the nominal expression referring to the starting point or source of the journey is 'minn' "from" (for the assimilation of the final consonants of the preposition to the following article, cf. ch. 1, § 5.1). The preposition preceding the nominal referring to the end-point or goal of the journey is 'sa' "to". Of the prepositional phrase mid-dar we will say that it encodes a 'source role'. Similarly sa l-iskola encodes a 'goal role'. The referent of the nominal Ġanni is the one who has travelled from the source to the goal. Of this nominal expression we will therefore say that it encodes a 'traveller role' (but cf. ch. 3, § 1.2, where we will see that the matter is not as simple as that). These three roles will be

referred to for brevity's sake as 'source', 'goal' and 'traveller' respectively : cf. ch. 1, § 3, for some indication of the complex nature of these roles. The notion of a journey, however is itself complex : it involves an initial locational relation, a final locational relation, a component of directed movement, and following from the latter, an intermediate locational relation; that is to say, at any given point during the progress of John's journey in (1), the traveller occupies a position intermediate between the source and the goal of his journey (cf. Jessen 1974, ch. 7). In Jessen's terms, a journey involving an intermediate locational relation is called an 'extended journey'.

### 1.1 Border-crossings

In chapter one, § 3, I talked merely of a location role. So far we have talked of source and goal locations as points, but they may also be conceived of as areas, in which case the traveller in leaving the source of his journey, traverses a border between what is the area pertaining to the source location and what is not. Similarly, in reaching the goal of his journey he traverses the border into the area pertaining to the goal location. These two phases in the journey Jessen refers to as 'border-crossings' (1974, ch. 7). If the source and goal locations of the journey encoded in (1) are conceived of as areas,

2. Ġanni qasam il-fruntiera bejn  
 John he crossed the border between  
 "John crossed the border between

l-Italja u Franza  
 the Italy and France  
 Italy and France"

rather than points, then the sentence also implicitly encodes two border-crossings. The sentence in (2) explicitly encodes a border-crossing. The crucial difference between an extended journey and a border-crossing is that in the latter there is no intermediate locational relation the traveller can occupy; as Jessen puts it, the intermediate space between a source and a goal becomes increasingly smaller until one eventually reaches the limiting case where the two are contiguous locations.

3. a. Ġanni telaq minn Malta  
 John he left from Malta  
 "John left Malta"
- b. Ġanni wasal id-dar  
 John he arrived the house  
 "John arrived home"

The journeys encoded in (3) also involve implicit border crossings, but in an arrangement different to that in (1). (3a) involves a border-crossing followed by a

journey, from a source, and the goal is not specified; while (3b) involves a journey followed by a border-crossing, into a goal, and the source is not specified. Other aspects and combinations are discussed by Jessen (1974, ch. 7).

## 1.2 The source preposition

Let us now return to the extended journey encoded in (1) to take a closer look at the prepositions involved. Of the preposition 'minn' we have said simply so far that it precedes the nominal referring to the source of the journey. This cardinal instance of the use of 'minn' however can be extended to less concrete situations. Castles (1975, p. 123), for instance, notes the lack of fit between English 'by' and Maltese 'minn' in her example 'He caught me by the hand' and the Maltese equivalent in

4. Qabadni            minn idejja  
     He caught me from hand-mine  
     "He caught me by the hand"

(4). Here the source interpretation of 'minn' can be preserved if the act of catching encoded by 'qabad' is seen as originating from the point encoded by 'idejja' "my hand". Similarly in the case of her example 'He can afford to spend money' and the Maltese equivalent she gives (reproduced in (5)), 'minn' precedes the source (or hoard,

5. Ghandu minn fejn jonfoq  
 at him from where he spends  
 "He can afford to spend money"

as it were) out of which the spending is done. (Note that in (5) the preposition 'ghand' followed by a suffixed pronoun indicates possession, cf. ch. 1, § 3).

'Minn' can also occur in a position preceding another preposition as in (6), a distribution also noted by Castles

6. a. Il- halliel harab minn taht il- mina  
 the thief he escaped from under the tunnel  
 "The thief escaped through the tunnel"
- b. Ghadda minn hdejn il- hanut  
 he passed from near the shop  
 "He passed by the shop"

(1975) who concludes that 'minn' is a "key" preposition in Maltese (p. 34), also calling it an "auxiliary" preposition (p. 41). However as can be seen from (6a), 'minn' can occur in a context in which a 'path' interpretation seems more plausible than a 'source' one, or as Castles (1975, p. 41-42) puts it, it "can also indicate what might be termed the route and what is normally expressed in English by 'through'". Zammit Mangion (1977) notes this too and gives the example in (7), suggesting that this might be elliptical for 'Ghadda minn go l-Imsida', the form go

7. a. Ghadda mill- Imsida  
 he passed from the Imsida  
 "He passed through Imsida"
- b. Ghadda sparāt mill- Imsida  
 he passed fired (masc. sg.) from the Imsida  
 "He passed at break-neck speed through Imsida"

being related to gewwa "inside". I find this quite plausible not only in view of the distribution of 'minn' before other prepositions, but also in view of the optional occurrence of certain prepositions, which would tie in the optionality of go / gewwa in (7) with similar instances (cf. ch. 4, § 5). 'Imsida' in (7) cannot even be considered a point on a route, from which as it were, a journey can be seen to start again, as from a secondary source. As can be seen from (7b) an interpretation involving such a break in the journey is clearly not feasible. So we are left with the problem of reconciling the 'source' meaning of 'minn' with the 'path' interpretation under consideration. Rather than attempting a solution here, I offer in what follows a few considerations which might serve to indicate that such a reconciliation between the two interpretations is not impossible. Consider first the sentences in (8).

8. a. It- tank inqasam. mill- genb  
 The tank he broke from the side  
 "The tank split down the side"

- b. It- travu xxaggaq minn- nofs  
 The rafter he cracked from the middle  
 "The rafter cracked in the middle"
- c. Marija ghaddiet il- hajta minn ghajn  
 she passed the thread from eye  
 "Mary threaded the needle (passed the thread  
 il- labra  
 the needle  
 through the needle's eye)"
- d. Ġanni ghadda minn bejn il- pilastru  
 he passed from between the pillars  
 "John passed through the pillars"

In (8a) and (8b) we can retain in a straightforward way the 'source' meaning of 'minn' by interpreting the border-crossing (of splitting in (8a), and of cracking in (8b)) as originating from a particular location. If we accept an analogous interpretation for (8c) and (8d) it will be seen that the resulting meaning of a 'path' comes from the interplay of the lexical meaning of the verb and the locations of the movements involved respectively (note that in (8c) 'go' can again be inserted after 'minn' as suggested by Zammit Mangion). That some such interplay is involved can be seen from the set of sentences in (9) in which 'ghadda' is contrasted with two other (deictically marked) verbs of motion. In (ib) and (iib) 'minn' receives a straightforward source interpretation and (iiib) is of





- b. Ġanni għadda bejn il- pilastri  
 John he passed between the pillars  
 "John passed through the pillars"

(10b) is quite acceptable and receives an identical interpretation to that in (8d) : that is, 'minn' is optional at least in (8d).

It might be the case that in such problematical instances 'minn' is to be interpreted not as encoding a path, but rather, the choice of one particular path from among other possible alternatives. Such an interpretation could perhaps be construed as receiving some support from the frequent occurrence of 'minn' before other prepositions (cf. the examples in (6)).

In this case the journey encoded by the verb can be seen as originating from a particular choice (of one path as opposed to another), analogously to the interpretation for (8a) and (8b).

### 1.3 The problem of the distribution of the preposition 'lil'

The preposition 'sa' which precedes the expression referring to the goal of the journey encoded in (1), is only one among some others, which together can be termed directional. As hinted at in ch. 1, § 4, we will be considering directional prepositions (in ch. 2, § 1.4) in an attempt to arrive at some understanding of the meaning of 'lil',

- the preposition which occurs in certain cases before the direct object of a transitive verb (cf. ch. 1, §§ 2.2.6 and 3). Here we will be considering the problem of the distribution of 'lil'.

Sutcliffe (1936, p. 169) says that "... this word... is used to introduce the object of the verb"; and further on "the use of this particle is not confined to objects which are defined by the article or by a possessive pronoun or are definite, like proper names, of their own nature. It is used indifferently with objects which are quite indefinite". It seems as if Sutcliffe wants to avoid commitment as to the category this form belongs to. However in the same section he does refer the reader to the section entitled "The Prepositions" for "... this word and its forms"; and in this latter section he says of 'lil' that "it has another use as a mere sign of the accusative or object of the verb".

Aquilina (1965, p. 114) proposes the identity of the preposition and the object marker more boldly and also adds a constraint on its distribution in its latter function : "Besides being a preposition, lil is also used before the object of a verb, regularly so when the object is a proper noun". However as can be seen from the sentences in (11) this constraint is in need of careful qualification, since at least with proper names which are also place names (as in (11c,d)) the omission of the preposition does not

11. a. Mill- karozza, Ġanni ra 'l Pawlu  
 from the car John saw to Paul  
 "From the car, John saw Paul

fil- ġnien  
 in the garden  
 in the garden"

- b. Mill-karozza, Ġanni ra Pawlu fil-ġnien  
 c. Mill- ajruplan, Ġanni ra 'l Malta  
 from the aeroplane John saw to Malta  
 "From the aeroplane, John saw Malta

tahtu  
 under him  
 beneath him"

- d. Mill-ajruplan Ġanni ra Malta tahtu  
 "From the aeroplane, John saw Malta beneath him"

result in unacceptability as in the case of (11b).  
 Intuitively, I feel there is some difference of meaning  
 in (11c) and (11d), apparently connected with definiteness,  
 which I will not consider here (but cf. ch. 2, §§ 2.2, 2.4).

Bonello (1968, pp. II-13, 14) carries the discussion  
 further. He distinguishes two types of transitive verbs :  
 those which take only one object which is always direct,  
 and those which can take two objects, one direct, the other  
 non-direct. The preposition lil, he says, occurs in a  
 construction containing the first type of verb if it is  
 followed by an NP object which is definite and specific,

12. a. It- tifel ihobb tifla  
       the boy he loves girl  
       "The boy loves a girl"
- b. It- tifel ihobb lit- tifla  
       the boy he loves to the girl  
       "The boy loves the girl"

as in the sentences in (12). But this too is not a water-tight constraint, as can be seen from the perfectly acceptable sentence in (13). For the second type of transitive

13. It- tifel ihobb it- tifla  
       the boy he loves the girl  
       "The boy loves the girl"

verb Bonello distinguishes, he says that lil always occurs between the NP direct object and the NP non-direct object, as in (14); in this case too, however, careful qualification is needed (cf. my discussion of nominals referring to places in ch. 2, § 2.2).

14. It- tifel baghat il- ktieb lit- tifla  
       the boy he sent the book to the girl  
       "The boy sent the book to the girl"

Cauchi (1972, p. 117-118) notes that when the preposition lil introduces a NP<sub>2</sub> [that is, in her usage, a NP dominated by a VP node], it functions as a determiner, and

denotes the person to whom an action has been done. Note that Cauchi too brings up the question of definiteness (lil as determiner) which we will be touching upon in ch. 2, § 2.4. She goes on to note the acceptability of a sentence like

Rajt il- ktieb

I saw the book

"I saw the book"

as opposed to the unacceptability of

\*Rajt Marija

I saw Mary

for the acceptable

Rajt lil Marija

I saw to Mary

"I saw Mary"

The only constraint on the distribution of lil which she proposes however is that it must be used to "introduce the NP<sub>2</sub> when this is a person". Krier (1976, p. 53) also follows suit : "... pour les verbes "transitifs", il y a, à côté de la forme : Verbe + Objet direct la contrainte : Verbe + fonctionnel + Objet ce qui correspond à la dichotomie "non-personne" - "personne" ."

15. a. Rajt lill- mara ta' Ġanni

I saw to the woman of John

"I saw John's wife"

- b. Rajt il- mara ta' Ġanni  
 I saw the woman of John  
 "I saw John's wife"

However this restriction too is not watertight : in addition to the sentence in (13) note that the sentence in (15b) is perfectly acceptable, although the direct object of the verb is an expression referring to a person, and there is no preposition preceding it.

Schabert (1976, p. 212) notes that lil "dient ausserdem zur Einleitung des direkten und indirekten Objekts", but he all but dismisses the problem : "Im Fall des direkten Objekts ist seine Verwendung fakultativ".

Clearly although the appearance of lil before certain direct objects is not in question, there is no unanimity as to the restrictions on its distribution and even where constraints are put forward, they are not watertight. We shall be returning to this problem in ch. 2, § 2 : in the meantime however I note Zammit Mangion's summary (1977, p. 151) of the problem, while disagreeing with her that it "might... be rather superficial". She says : "while lil is consistently used with 'indirect objects', there are also 'direct objects' in ergative [ie. presumably, causative, or more simply, transitive] clauses that appear to take this prepositional form, though its behaviour in these cases is very erratic. Thus one can say both



Ir- raḡel qatel lit- tifel

the man he killed to the boy

"The man killed the boy"

and

Ir- raḡel qatel it- tifel

the man he killed the boy

"The man killed the boy"

Saq liḡ- ḡiemel

he drove to the horse

"He drove the horse"

and

Saq iḡ- ḡiemel

he drove the horse

"He drove the horse"

Ra lix- xiha

he saw to the old woman

"He saw the old woman"

and

Ra x- xiha

he saw the old woman

"He saw the old woman"

but never

\*Kiel lill- ikel

he ate to the food

"He ate the food"

or

\*Pejjep      lis-      sigarett  
 he smoked to the cigarette  
 "He smoked the cigarette"

#### 1.4 The goal prepositions

In this section we will try to obtain some idea of the meaning of the preposition 'lil' by contrasting it with three other directional prepositions : 'sa', the preposition which figures in sentence (1), 'lejn' (roughly, "towards") and 'ghal' (roughly, "for").

The first pair we contrast is 'sa' and 'lejn', exempli-

16. a. Ġanni mexa      sa l-      iskola  
          John he walked to the school  
          "John walked to school"
- b. Ġanni mexa      lejn      l-      iskola  
          John he walked towards the school  
          "John walked towards the school"
- c. Ġanni wasal      l-      iskola  
          John he arrived the school  
          "John arrived at school"

fied in (16a) and (16b) respectively. Notice that while (16a) implies (16c), (16b) does not imply (16c). (I do not use the term 'imply' in its strict sense of 'logical

implication', but rather in the sense of 'implicate', cf. Grice, 1975). For the moment we note that 'sa' and 'lejn' contrast at least in so far as 'lejn' encodes motion towards a goal, whereas 'sa' implies that the goal has been reached. Notice that the verb in both (16a) and (16b) is in the Perfect form, but other things being equal, the same relation of implication with (16c) holds, had the verb in (16a) and (16b) been in the Imperfect form (cf. ch. 4, § 1 and ch. 5, § 3.3 for the distinction between the two forms). In our terminology, we can say that 'lejn' encodes a journey towards a goal, whereas 'sa' encodes a border-crossing into a goal.

Contrasting now the pair 'lejn' and 'ghal', the problem is to account for the difference in meaning between (17a)

17. a. Ġanni mar lejn it- tifel  
 John he went towards the boy  
 "John went towards / approached the boy"
- b. Ġanni mar ghat- tifel  
 John he went for the boy  
 "John went / called for the boy"

and (17b). The verb in (17) is again in the Perfect in both sentences, and the only difference between the two is in the preposition. (17a) asserts that John moved in the direction of the boy, but (17b) carries with it the notion of intentionality, of definiteness of purpose. I

try to bring out this difference in the English gloss in the distinction between 'went towards / approached' and 'called for'. (17b) in fact could almost be understood as saying that John went in search of the boy. From (17a) one would understand that John has the boy in sight for instance, but this is not necessarily so in (17b). The

18. Ġanni mar        biex        jiġbor    it- tifel  
       John   he went in order to he picks the boy  
       "John went to collect / pick up the boy"

sentence in (18) would probably be regarded as a fair paraphrase of (17b) in the intended sense (that is, excluding the possible interpretation, for (18), that John goes in aid of the boy who has fallen). Now in (18) the preposition 'ghal' has been replaced by a form biex (followed by a verb in the Imperfect) which expresses finality or purpose, and this tends to support the interpretation of intentionality advanced for 'ghal' above. In spite of the difference we have been noting between 'lejn' and 'ghal', there is, however, one important similarity. Just as (17a) does not imply that John actually went to a location immediately contiguous with that of the boy, so (17b) does not imply that John actually collected the boy (or that he found him) : both 'lejn' and 'ghal', that is, do not encode the goal as actually reached.

Now consider the sentences in (19). In (19a) Paul

19. a. Pawlu hares lejn it- tieqa u  
 Paul he looked towards the window and  
 "Paul looked at the window but

ma rahix / \*ma sabhiex  
 neg. he saw her / neg. he found her  
 did not see it / find it"

- b. Pawlu hares ghat-tieqa u ma rahix / ma sabhiex  
 "Paul watched out for the window but did not  
 see it / find it"

directs his gaze at the window, or at least, at the spot where he thinks the window should be, but does not see it. In (19b) on the other hand there is again the notion of purposeful activity (cf. the difference in the gloss between 'look at' and 'watch out for') so much so that the meaning of the second conjoined sentence (literally, 'and did not see it') could be regarded as equivalent to the alternative conjoined sentence : 'and did not find it'. But the latter sentence is contradictory in the case of (19a) : Paul does not need to 'find' the window, he knows well enough where it is, or at least, where it should be (cf. what was said earlier, in the case of (17a) about the boy being in John's sight), but something is impeding his vision, and so he does not see it, even though he looks at it. In our terminology, therefore, we will say that 'lejn' encodes a journey

(in progress) towards a goal but the goal is not encoded as reached (as we have seen) whereas 'ghal' can be regarded as encoding a journey towards a goal together with a potential border-crossing into that goal which has not yet been actualized (and which underlies the notion of 'finality' associated with this preposition).

In contrasting 'sa' and 'ghal' we note only for the moment that the former implies that the goal has already been reached whereas the latter does not.

Turning now to the preposition 'lil', observe that

20. a. Ġanni ta l- ktieb lil Pawlu  
 John he gave the book to Paul  
 "John gave the book to Paul"
- b. Pawlu ghandu l- ktieb  
 Paul at-him the book  
 "Paul has the book"
- c. Ġanni bagħat il- ktieb lil Pawlu  
 John he sent the book to Paul  
 "John sent the book to Paul"

(20a) implies (20b). That this relationship does not hold merely because of the lexical meaning of the verb in (20a) (where one might argue : if X has given something to Y, then it is tautological to say that Y has what X has given him) can be seen from (20c) which also implies (20b).

Again the verbs in (20a) and (20c) are in the Perfect form, but other things being equal, the same relationship of implication holds with (20b) if the verbs were in the Imperfect form. It seems that 'lil', like 'sa', occurring without further qualification with anything that might plausibly be interpreted as a goal, somehow implies that that goal has been reached.

Let us now take a closer look at 'sa' and 'lil' contrasting them in a position followed by the spatial, deictically marked, expression 'hemm' "there" as in the sentences in (21a) and (21b). At first sight it seems that one diffe-

21. a. Ġanni mar s' hemm  
       John he went to there  
       "John has been / went there /<sub>up</sub> to that point"
- b. Ġanni mar lil hemm  
       "John has been / went in that direction"
- c. Ġanni wasal s'hemm / lil hemm  
       John he arrived  
       "John has been to that point / up to that point"

rence between them could be that whereas 'sa' encodes a journey with limited extent (in (21a), since as we saw above, 'sa' encodes a border-crossing into a goal) the journey with 'lil' in (21b) is open ended (cf. my gloss 'to that point' for 'sa', 'in that direction' for 'lil'). This conclusion however seems to be contradicted by (21c) :



the verb 'wasal' as we saw in ch. 2, § 1.1, encodes a journey followed by a border-crossing (cf. the discussion of the sentence in (3b)). Of its nature therefore 'wasal' encodes a journey which is not open ended, but bounded, at least in its termination. As such its compatibility with 's'hemm' in (21c) is not unexpected. However its compatibility with 'lil hemm' in (21c) points to the probability that the interpretation of open endedness we ended up with for (21b) is due more to the presence of the expression 'hemm' than to 'lil'. Notice in this connection

22. a. Ġanni baghat il- ktieb lil Pawlu  
           John he sent the book to Paul  
           "John sent the book to Paul"
- b. Il- ktieb wasallu                      lil Pawlu  
           the book he arrived to him to Paul  
           "The book got to Paul"

that sentence (20c) repeated here as (22a) implies, besides (20b), the sentence in (22b). For the suffixation of the preposition and the personal pronoun to the verb wasal, cf. ch. 1, § 5.6 (and especially the sentences in (21) in that section).

The difference therefore seems rather to lie in the mere encoding, by 'sa', of a border-crossing into a goal, while 'lil' encodes a journey followed by a border crossing into a goal. (21b), therefore, can be interpreted as

meaning that John actually progressed through all the points included in the reference of the expression 'lil hemm' "in that direction", but no further, that is to say, "in that direction (up to a definite point)".

In this connection, note that both 'lil' and 'ghal' are in contrast with 'sa' : the former both encode a journey followed by a border-crossing, while the latter encodes only a border-crossing. The difference between 'lil' and 'ghal' would then lie in the actuality of the border-crossing in the case of 'lil' and its potentiality (awaiting realization) in the case of 'ghal'. Seen in this light, Castles' characterisation (1975, p. 66) of the distinction between 'sa' and 'lil' as one between 'extent' and 'general directionality' is too general and only partially correct. In her example with 'sa',

gham        sa Ghawdex

"He swam to Gozo"

the 'extent' interpretation is the result of the interaction between the lexical meaning of the verb (which can be characterized as encoding an extended journey), and the type of sentence (which includes a goal). Besides, we have seen that 'lejn', 'ghal' and 'lil' can all be interpreted as encoding a component of directionality, as indeed, can 'sa', in as much as it encodes a border-crossing into a goal.

Let us finally strengthen our arguments for the proposed distinction between 'sa' and 'lil' by examining

23. i a. Ġanni mar l- iskola  
           John he went the school  
           "John went to school"
- b. Ġanni mar sa l-iskola
- c. ~~x~~ Ġanni mar lill-iskola
- ii a.? Ġanni baghat il- ktieb sa Pawlu  
           John he sent the book to Paul
- b. Ġanni baghat il-ktieb lil Pawlu  
           "John sent the book to Paul"
- iii a. Ġanni xehet il-ktieb sa Pawlu  
           he threw
- b. Ġanni xehet il-ktieb lil Pawlu

the sentences in (23). It is instructive first of all to look at the possible difference between (ia) and (ib) : the former might be said of a schoolboy going to school, in the normal sense of the word, while in the latter the relationship between John and the school does not seem to be a particularly committed one : it is almost as though we have in mind the school as a building rather than as an institution. (ib) simply says that John entered the area included in the reference of the expression 'the school' : it does not imply that he actually went into the school building - he could just have had a chat with the porter.


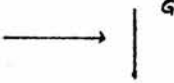


In (ia) however, John goes to school, say for his every day classes (cf. ch. 4, § 5, for other instances of the "optional" presence of other prepositions). (ic) as noted, is unacceptable : if our analysis is correct, this is because 'lil' completely duplicates the journey and border-crossing component of 'mar' as in (ia). This however is only part of the reason, since as we will see in the next section (ch. 2, § 2) the nature of the nominal preceded by 'lil' has an important part to play in the meaning (or rather in this case, the unacceptability) of (ic).

Let us now contrast the sentences in (ii) with those in (iii). The meaning of (iiib) is that John threw the book to Paul, whereas in (iiia) John throws the book such that it comes to be where Paul is located (that is, it enters the area conceived of as being occupied by Paul). Without further qualification (iiia) could probably be translated as 'John threw the book at Paul's feet', whereas the meaning in (iiib) is that John threw the book at Paul (either to hit him or in order that Paul might catch it). Given our analysis of (iii) we could explain the fact that (iia) sounds odd on the basis of the lexical meaning of the verb 'baghat', which seems to imply a relationship between the object sent and the receiver : this would be consonant with the meaning of 'lil' ("up to, and including, location X") but not with that of 'sa' (which, as encoding a border-crossing into a goal, can be seen to imply

physical contiguity with it, but no special relationship. This latter component can perhaps be seen to derive from the directional element, encoded by 'lil' in addition to the following border-crossing).

The table in (24) attempts a graphic representation

24. Table contrasting four directional prepositions

a.	'sa' : a border-crossing into a goal
	
b.	'lejn' : an extended journey towards a goal
	
c.	'lil' : an extended journey, followed by a border-crossing into a goal
	
d.	'ghal' : an extended journey, followed by an as yet unactualized border-crossing into a goal
	

of the distinctions we have looked at in this section. Note that in the case of 'ghal' (cf. the figure in (d)) the broken line represents the potential, or better, the

unactualized, border-crossing into a goal, which seems to have some connection with the notion of 'finality' or 'intention', present in the meaning of this preposition.

## 2. First- and second-order entities

In this section we return to the problem considered earlier (cf. ch. 2, § 1.3) in connection with the distribution of the preposition 'lil'. The sentences in (25) have an unambiguous status with respect to their acceptability. In other words, we begin our consideration of the distribution of 'lil' by studying first clear cases (unlike some of the sentences quoted in ch. 2, § 1.3) of the occurrence or absence of the preposition. For the moment we consider only instances of 'lil' occurring (or not) after a transitive verb and preceding one nominal (Bonello 1968 : "type one verbs", cf. ch. 2, § 1.3). The sentences in (25) are arranged in such a way that the preposition occurs in the (i) sentences but not in the (ii) sentences. Notice that the non-occurrence of 'lil' makes sentences (iia) and (iib) unacceptable, while its occurrence makes sentences (ic) to (ig) unacceptable. I propose to explain this pattern in the distribution of 'lil' following Lyons' ontological assumptions (1977, § 11.3) stemming from naive realism. The first and most basic of these is that the external world contains a number of individual persons, animals and other more or

- 25.i a. Ġanni ra 'l Pawlu  
he saw to  
"John saw Paul"
- b. Ġanni sema' 'l Marija tibki  
he heard she cries  
"John heard Mary crying"
- c.x Ġanni ra lill- qtil ta' Pawlu  
to the killing of  
d.x Ġanni sema' lill- biki ta' Marija  
to the crying of  
e.x Ġanni ra lill- incident  
to the accident  
f.x Ġanni sema' lill- istorbju  
to the disturbance  
g.x Ġanni studja lill- iżvilupp  
he studied to the development
- ii a.x Ġanni ra Pawlu  
b.\* Ġanni sema' Marija tibki  
c. Ġanni ra l- qtil ta' Pawlu  
the killing of  
"John saw the killing of Paul"  
d. Ġanni sema' l- biki ta' Marija  
the crying of  
"John heard the crying of Mary"  
e. Ġanni ra l- incident  
the accident  
"John saw the accident"  
f. Ġanni sema' l- istorbju  
the disturbance  
"John heard the disturbance"  
g. Ġanni studja l- iżvilupp  
the development  
"John studied the development  
ta' Malta  
of  
of Malta"



less discrete physical objects. Such physical objects are termed first-order entities. It is characteristic of all first-order entities (persons, animals and things) that, under normal conditions, they are relatively constant as to their perceptual properties; that they are located, at any point in time, in what is, psychologically at least, a three-dimensional space; and that they are publicly observable. Correspondingly, proper names, pronouns and descriptive noun-phrases that are used characteristically, to refer to first-order entities may be described as first-order nominals.

Events, processes, states-of affairs, etc., on the other hand, which are located in time, are termed second-order entities. In English, second-order entities are said to occur or take place, rather than to exist, and in Maltese the verb 'ġara' (literally, "he happened") is used to refer to their location in time. Expressions that refer characteristically to second-order entities may be called second-order nominals.

On the basis of the sentences in (25) we can say that the occurrence of 'lil' marks the difference between a first and a second-order nominal.

## 2.1 The location of first and second-order entities

Let us now take a closer look at the encoding of the



26.

- i L-incident  
"The accident"
- a. x qieghed fil- pjazza / fit- triq  
he is located in the square / in the road
- b. gara fil- pjazza / fit- triq  
he happened  
"happened in the square / in the road"
- c. gara dal- ghodu / l- gingha l- ohra  
this morning / the week the other  
"happened this morning / last week"

- ii Ganni qieghed ghoxrin pied 'il' boghod  
he is located twenty feet to distance  
"John is (standing) twenty feet away"
- a. x mill- qtil ta' Pawlu  
from the killing of Paul
- b. mill-kantuniera  
"from the corner"
- c. minn fejn gara l- qtil  
from where he happened the killing  
"from where the killing  
ta' Pawlu  
of Paul  
of Paul happened"
- d. mill- post fejn inqatel Pawlu  
from the place where he was killed  
"from where Paul was killed"

26. iii Il- pulizija waqqaf il- karoza hamsin jarda 'l isfel ...  
 the policeman he stopped the car fifty yard to down ...  
 "The policeman stopped the car fifty yards beyond..."

- |   |              |                                       |                   |                   |
|---|--------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| { | a. ? mill-   | incident / ? mit-                     | tragedja / ? mid- | dizastru          |
|   |              | from the accident                     | from the tragedy  | from the disaster |
|   |              | "the accident"                        | "the tragedy"     | "the disaster"    |
| { | b. mill-     | arblu / mill-                         | kantuniera / mid- | dar               |
|   |              | from the pole                         | from the corner   | from the house    |
|   |              | "the pole"                            | "the corner"      | "the house"       |
| { | c. minn fejn | grat                                  | it- tragedja      |                   |
|   |              | from where she happened               | the tragedy       |                   |
|   |              | "the spot where the tragedy happened" |                   |                   |

iv Ghaddiet sena mill- qtil ta' Pawlu  
 she passed a year from the killing of Paul  
 "A year has passed since Paul's murder"

v It- tragedja u d- dizastru graw gingha wara xulxin  
 the tragedy and the disaster they happened a week behind each other  
 "The tragedy and the disaster occurred within a week of each other"

26. vi Il- ftuh tal- Parlament gej gimgha wara l- inawgurazzjoni  
 the opening of the Parliament he is coming a week behind the inauguration  
 "The opening of Parliament will take place a week after the inauguration

tas- sala  
 of the hall  
 of the hall"

vii L- anniversarju tal- qtil ta' Pawlu għadu xahar 'il bogħod  
 the anniversary of the killing of Paul he-yet month to distance  
 "The anniversary of Paul's murder is still a month away

mit- tiffkira ta' meta sar Maġistrat  
 from the remembrance of when he became magistrate  
 from the commemoration of his becoming a magistrate"

location of first and second-order entities. As can be seen from a comparison of (26ia) and (26ib) the verb 'qaghad' (in its so called present participial form) "to be (physically) located" cannot be used to predicate location of a nominal like 'l-incident'. (For a closer look at this verb, cf. ch. 4, § 5). Sentence (26ib) with 'gara' however is perfectly acceptable. Note, in this connection, (26ii) in which 'qaghad' is predicated of a first-order nominal. Coming back to (26i), once 'gara' is used of 'l-incident', then the predication of location can refer to space, as in (ib), or it can refer to time, as in (ic).

Next compare the sentences in (26iia) and (26iib) : the sentence encoding the location of a first order entity (John) at a certain distance from a second-order entity (the killing of Paul) is unacceptable, while (iib), encoding John's location at a certain distance from the corner (a first-order entity) is quite acceptable. Finding an acceptable variant for (iia) involves first establishing an independent relationship with the second-order entity (the killing of Paul) and the place where it happened : via the expression 'fejn' "where", as in (iic), or 'post fejn' "place where", as in (iid). Only then can a relationship be established between John and the second-order entity.

However, what we have said so far cannot be said to be true of every second-order nominal. I am not sure whether the sentences in (26iii), for instance, are accept-

able or not. What is not in doubt is the unacceptability of sentences like the following:

\*Rajt lill- incident / lit- tragedja / lid- diżastru  
I saw to the accident to the tragedy to the disaster

Unfortunately it would take us too far afield to explore the possibility of establishing a classification of second-order nominals in terms of whether they are encoded by the language as occupying space or not.

Let us now turn to a comparison of the sentences in (26i) - (26iii) with those in (26iv) - (26vii). The sentences from the first group juxtapose first-order entities, with second-order entities in various combinations. The sentences in the second group however juxtapose only second-order entities with other second-order entities. Note that in these sentences we have the occurrence of expressions which are used elsewhere to indicate a relationship of location between first-order entities. Note for instance in (26vii) the expression 'il bogħod' used in conjunction with 'xahar' to indicate a certain lapse of time between the two entities involved; and in (26vi) the use of the verb 'għie' "he came" (in its participial form għej) together with the preposition 'wara' "behind".

It would seem from the preceding discussion, that there is some evidence to suggest that at least for some second-order entities as encoded in Maltese, physical location cannot be predicated of them.

## 2.2 Place nominals

However there is also another pattern to the distribution of 'lil' (exemplified in the sentences in (27)) which emerges in connection with nominals referring to places (for the syntactic and semantic ambivalence of place-referring expressions, cf. Lyons 1977, § 12.3). It would seem difficult to reconcile this pattern with what we have just been proposing above. The verb in (27i) - (27iii) belongs to Bonello's 'type two class' (cf. ch. 2, § 1.3) of which he says that 'lil' always occurs between the NP direct object and the NP non-direct object. That Bonello is wrong in the statement of this restriction can be seen from sentences (27i) - (27iii). Now the appearance of 'lil' before 'Pawlu' in (ia), but not before 'l-ufficcju' and 'il-posta' as in (iib) and (iid) is puzzling. Notice furthermore that 'lil' before the place nominals in (ii) is unacceptable, but that the sentences in (iiia) are quite acceptable. The only difference between the place nominals in (ii) and those in (iii) is that those in the latter group are referred to by expressions which are proper-names. In fact it is the nominals in (iiib) which receive a "place" interpretation. In (iiia) these nominals are interpreted rather as institutions. In a later section (ch. 4, § 5) we will meet other instances of the optionality of the preposition and the corresponding different interpretations, which, it is hypothesised, might be accounted for in terms of the notion of conversational implicature.

27.

i Ġanni baghat il- ktieb  
 John he sent the book  
 "John sent the book"

- a. lil Pawlu  
 "to Paul"  
 b. x Pawlu

ii Ġanni baghat il-ktieb

- a. x lill-uffiċċju  
 "to the office"  
 b. l- uffiċċju  
 the office  
 c. x lill-posta  
 "to the post-office"  
 d. il- posta  
 the post-office

iii L-avukat  
 baghat  
 l-ittra

- a. lill- Qorti / lill- Magistratura  
 to the Court / to the Magistrature  
 b. il- Qorti / il- Magistratura  
 the Court / the Magistrature

iv Mill- ajruplan,  
 from the aeroplane  
 "From the aeroplane,

Ġanni ra  
 John he saw  
 John saw"

- a. 'l Malta tahtu  
 to Malta under him  
 "Malta beneath him"  
 b. Malta tahtu  
 c. lill- Italja tahtu  
 to the Italy  
 d. l- Italja tahtu  
 the Italy

Sentences (27iva) and (ivb) reproduce the examples given in ch. 2, § 1.3 as (11c) and (11d) where they were used to show that Aquilina's restriction on the occurrence of 'lil' before proper names was in need of qualification. Some names of countries in Maltese occur without the definite article, and others with it, but the sentences in (27iv) show that the alternation of 'lil' is not affected by this. However the sentences do have a different interpretation: in the versions without 'lil', one would understand that, say as John was looking out of the window, he saw various things, among them the referent of the expression concerned. In the sentences with the preposition however, there is a special relationship between the perceiver and the object perceived, almost as if John were looking out for the entity in question, or was expecting to see it. We will be taking the matter up again later in this chapter. For the moment I note only that in view of the possibility that a case might be made for justifying the absence of 'lil' before certain place nominals on other grounds, the pattern of its distribution exemplified in (27) is not necessarily to be taken as counter evidence to my proposal that Maltese might be understood as typically encoding distance between first-order entities, and between second order entities, but not between a first and a second-order entity.



### 2.3 A hierarchy of first-order entities

Let us now turn to a further problem in the distribution of 'lil'. The object nominals in (28) are all

28. a. Ġanni ra lit- tifel ġej  
 John he saw to the boy he coming  
 "John saw the boy coming"
- b. Ġanni ra t-tifel ġej
- c. Ġanni ra lill- kelb ġej  
 to the dog  
 "John saw the dog coming"
- d. Ġanni ra l-kelb ġej
- e.? Ġanni ra lill- karożza ġejja  
 to the car she coming
- f. Ġanni ra l-karożza.ġejja  
 "John saw the car coming"

first-order nominals; and yet, unlike the previous sentences we have been considering, the occurrence or non-occurrence of 'lil' before these nominals does not seem to be critical with respect to the acceptability of the sentences in (28), except possibly for (28e) which sounds a *little* odd. It must have been this marked contrast in the distribution of 'lil' : obligatorily present in (25ia) and (25ib), obligatorily absent in (25iic) - (25iig), and optionally present in (28), which led to the statement of different restrictions (cf. ch. 2, § 1.3) by different scholars. As far as the

distribution of 'lil' we have noted is concerned, the solution I propose follows from our assumptions (with Lyons 1977, § 11.3) about first-order and second-order entities. In his discussion of first-order entities, he notes that within this class, persons occupy a privileged position and furthermore that there "seems to be operative in many languages, if not in all, a hierarchy within the classificatory scheme that is employed to describe or refer to first-order entities such that persons are more strongly individualized than animals, and animals more strongly individualized than things". It would seem therefore that the distinction between first-order and second-order entities encoded in Maltese is not a clear cut one, but rather has the property of being more of a cline with well defined extremities, namely persons and second-order entities proper (of which the verb 'gara' can be predicated). But within the class of first-order entities there is a hierarchical arrangement so that (for the moment, on the basis of the examples in (28)) animate entities are higher on the scale of first-order entity status than inanimate ones, and the latter therefore are closer to second-order entities and are frequently encoded as such (note the oddity of (28a) with an occurrence of 'lil'). In so far as a native speaker is in doubt whether to classify non-personal physical objects as belonging to the class of first-order entities or to that of second-order entities both Schabert (1976) and Zammit Mangion (1977) are correct in their observations (cf. ch. 2, § 1.3).

Lyons' observation that persons occupy a privileged position within the class of first-order entities is borne out by our data : we have already seen that 'lil' is obligatorily present before nominals which are proper names and refer to persons. In an earlier section of his book, Lyons notes (1977, § 7.5) that the relation of a proper name to its bearer is different from that of a common noun to its denotata. Sutcliffe senses this in his note about proper names being definite "of their own nature" (1936, p. 169) and Bonello follows suit (1968, p. II 9). The notion of definiteness ties in with Lyons' remark about persons being more strongly individualized than animals, and animals more strongly individualized than things (cf. above). We will shortly take a closer, if brief, look at the interaction between definiteness in some of its realizations and the occurrence of 'lil', but before doing so we take up briefly another note of Sutcliffe's, namely, "The interrogative pronoun referring to persons is min 'who?'... That referring to things is xi... 'what?'" (1936, p. 173).

The sentences set out in (29) are designed to show that the distinction between 'min' and 'xi' proposed by Sutcliffe is not as neat as he suggests, although it still falls within our analysis involving a cline between first and second-order entities. The sentences in (i) exemplify the use of 'xi' with a second-order entity (where Sutcliffe

29. i a. X' gara?

what he happened

"What has happened?"

b. Gara incident

There was an accident"

c. Gratli storja tinkiteb

she happened to me a story she is written

"Something happened to me fit to be recorded"

ii a. X' rajt?

what you saw

"What did you see?"

b. Rajt l-incident / il-karozza / il-kelb /

"I saw the accident / the car / the dog

? it- tifel / x Pawlu

the boy / Paul"

c. Rajt x lill-incident / ? lill-karozza /

? lill-kelb / ? lit-tifel /

? lil Pawlu

iii a. Lil min rajt?

to who you saw

"Whom did you see?"

b. Rajt x l-incident / x il-karozza / x il-kelb

/ lit-tifel / lil Pawlu

has 'thing'). Notice here also the use of the verb 'gara'. The sentences in (ii) are intended to make two points. They attempt to show, first of all, that there is no clear cut boundary between what can be considered an acceptable answer to the question asked in (iia), and what cannot. 'Pawlu' in (iib) is clearly unacceptable as an answer to the question with 'xi', but less so if 'lil' is prefixed as in (iic), almost making of the answer an expression referring to an event (ie. a second-order entity, '(the perception) to Paul', as it were). Again in (ii) although 'it-tifel' cannot be regarded as referring to a thing, yet the unacceptability of this answer is less marked than the one with the proper name. However both 'lil Pawlu' and 'lit-tifel' are perfectly appropriate answers to the question in (iia), and at this degree in the hierarchy of first-order entities, Sutcliffe is correct in saying that 'min' refers to persons.

At the other end of the scale, 'l-inçident' in (iib) is an acceptable answer to the question in (iia) but not to the one in (iia). Similarly, 'il-karozza' and 'il-kelb' in (iib) are acceptable answers to the question in (iia) but not to the one in (iia). In so far as it is difficult to conceive of a dog as a thing (or a boy, for that matter) then Sutcliffe's neat distinction between 'min' and 'xi' breaks down; but if we accept Lyons' suggestion that within the class of first-order entities

there is a hierarchy according to which persons are more strongly individualized than animals, and animals more strongly individualized than things, then the distributional pattern which emerges in (29) is predictable.

Let us now return to (29iic) : although 'lill-inċident' is asterisked, it is still interpretable (just as in the case of 'lill-karozza' both in (29iic) and in (28e)). To me, the noun 'inċident' in the expression 'lill-inċident' (as opposed to 'l-inċident') seems almost to refer to something graspable (cf. also in this connection my discussion of the distinction between 'il-Qorti' and 'lill-Qorti' as being one between a place and an institution : cf. also ch. 4, § 5).

In the light of the preceding discussion we can perhaps explain this intuition (as well as account for Cauchi's and Krier's restriction [+/- person] on the occurrence of 'lil'). Persons are the first-order entities par excellence, which are most securely located in three-dimensional space, and correspondingly proper names are most unequivocally first-order nominals. Granted this, the occurrence of 'lil' in this context can be regarded as a significant characteristic of the way the universe is structured in Maltese. In its occurrence with other nominals it would therefore retain some of its associations it has when used with expressions that are proper names and refer to persons. In the case of 'lill-inċident' the notion of 'graspability'

stems from the association of 'lil' with entities encoded as fully and squarely occupying space. In the case of 'lill-Qorti' it is not difficult to see the connection between the association of 'lil' with persons and the corresponding interpretation of 'Qorti' in 'lill-Qorti' as an institution rather than a place : that is the interaction of the notions of 'personification' and 'place' results in the 'institution' interpretation.

So returning to the problem presented in ch. 2, § 1.3, both Sutcliffe and Aquilina are wrong in calling 'lil' "a sign of the accusative or object of the verb", since as we have seen there are many "objects" not marked by 'lil'. Besides, rather than being left merely with a statement on the distribution of the preposition in certain (grammatical) contexts, our analysis would tend to support a semantic motivation for its occurrence in terms of its meaning as a directional preposition.

#### 2.4 First and second-order entities and definiteness

It will be recalled that in the quotation from Sutcliffe (ch. 2, § 1.3) the notion of definiteness figures quite prominently, although inconclusively. Bonello too attempts the statement of a restriction on the occurrence of 'lil' in terms of an NP object which is definite and specific. Now that we have an interpretation for the distinction between first and second-order nominals,



at least at the extremities of the cline between first and second-order entities, it will be well to examine whether definiteness has any bearing on the distribution of 'lil' in the case of nominals referring to entities occupying a more intermediate position in the hierarchy we have established. After all, in Lyons' words (1977, § 11.4) "It is characteristic of at least the most typical determiners, including the definite article, that their primary semantic function is that of determining (ie. restricting or making more precise) the reference of the noun-phrases in which they occur", so that the more precise is the reference to a particular referent, the more solidly grounded in three-dimensional space it will appear to be, to a system sensitive to this particular distinction, and correspondingly, the chances of the occurrence of 'lil' will be much higher.

Definiteness in Maltese can be realized in a number of ways. The possibilities examined below are not intended to be an exhaustive list, especially since our immediate interest is not in definiteness itself, but simply in its effect on the occurrence of 'lil'. Also in what follows there is no question of clear-cut unacceptability, and all the utterances we will be examining in this connection are interpretable. Rather I will be interested in establishing whether the occurrence or absence of 'lil' in a particular context sounds more or less odd. This being so I employ



below the convention of prefixing a question mark to an utterance which sounds less odd and a question mark followed by an asterisk to an utterance which sounds more odd. An asterisk on its own marks an unacceptable sentence (obviously with such a small difference as the occurrence of 'lil', not in the sense that it is uninterpretable, but simply to indicate my judgement, in case I were inadvertently to produce or hear such an utterance, that it would have to be corrected). In order to simplify matters and for reasons of presentation, I use the frame 'Ganni ra \_\_\_\_' "John saw \_\_\_\_" in the examples which follow.

- 30.
- Ganni ra {
- a. tifel ghaddej mill-ghalqa  
a boy passing (masc.) from the field  
"a boy passing through the field"
- b.? lil tifel ghaddej mill-ghalqa
- c. kaxxa fuq il-mejda  
"a box on the table"
- d.?x lil kaxxa fuq il-mejda

31. { a. xi tfal ghaddejjin  
some boys passing (pl.)  
"some boys going by"  
Ġanni ra { b.? lil xi tfal ghaddejjin  
c. xi kaxex fuq il-mejda  
"some boxes on the table"  
d.?x lil xi kaxex fuq il-mejda

In (30) 'tifel' and 'kaxxa' occur without any determiner. Maltese has no indefinite article (but cf. ch. 4, § 2), so that definiteness is at a minimum here. As expected, 'lil' before 'kaxxa' (lower on the rank of first-order entities than 'tifel') sounds more odd than before 'tifel'.

In (31) we have the occurrence of the determiner 'xi' which prompted Sutcliffe (1936, p. 169) to dismiss definiteness as a crucial criterion for the occurrence of 'lil' (cf. his example 'Taf lil xi hadd?' "Do you know anyone?"). Although 'xi' introduces some determination (it can have specific or non-specific reference), it is still of a minimal kind and the distribution of 'lil' follows the same pattern as in (30).

The interpretation I would give to (31d) is that the boxes are almost personified and had got on the table of their own will (cf. my remarks in this connection about 'lill-Qorti' and 'lill-inċident' above).

- |          |   |  |
|----------|---|--|
| 32.      | { | a. ?        wiehed        tifel<br>one (masc.) boy<br>"a certain boy"  |
| Ganni ra | { | b.        lil wiehed tifel<br>c.        x        wahda        kaxxa<br>one (fem.) a box<br>d.        x lil wahda kaxxa |

Fenech (1978a, § 3.32) says of 'wiehed' : "Although strictly speaking there is no indefinite article in Maltese, one can make use of the word wiehed, literally, 'one', which functions as a substitute for the indefinite article ... The use of wiehed, wahda as indefinite articles for the masculine and feminine respectively is very limited, both in the literary and in the journalistic language. It is perhaps more used in the spoken language, but its occurrence in the newspapers, shows that such a usage for the indefinite article is acknowledged there". We will be taking a brief look at the question of the indefinite article in Maltese in ch. 4, § 2, but for the moment note that, as can be seen from (32c) and (32d), there is a restriction on the occurrence of 'wiehed' which escapes Fenech, and has to do with the hierarchization of first-order nominals. Only nominals referring to entities high up on the first-order scale allow the use of 'wiehed', and this is not so surprising in view of the fact that this expression serves as the ordinary first cardinal number. Since persons and other animate entities are higher up in the first-order hierarchy than non-animate objects, the latter are less individualized than the former. Now the expression 'wiehed' has unique reference, so its incompatibility with nominals referring to entities low down in the hierarchy is quite understandable. However even in the case of entities higher up in the hierarchy, determination with 'wiehed' is still weak : the expression

refers not to the identity, but merely to the individuality (or the unique cardinality) of the referent as one of its kind.

- |     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
| 33. | { | <p>a.      t-    tifel ghaddej<br/>         the boy    he passing<br/>         "the boy going by"</p> <p>b.      lit-    tifel ghaddej<br/>         to the boy    he passing<br/>         "his son going by"</p> <p>c.      l-    kaxxa fuq il- mejda<br/>         "the box    on    the table"</p> <p>d.    ?* lill-kaxxa fuq il-mejda</p> |
|-----|---|---|
- Ġanni ra

In (33) we have the appearance of the definite article. Notice the different meanings accompanying the alternation of 'lil' in (33a) and (33b). It is not that the meaning of (a) excludes that of (b) and vice versa, but other things being equal, the interpretations set out in (33) are the ones which first come to mind.

The

occurrence of 'lil' increases, as it were, the uniqueness of reference (already obtaining by means of the definite article) and this is interpreted as a more personal link between the speaker and the referent. On the other hand in the case of 'the box', the context in (33) together with the meaning of the lexeme does not allow a meaningful 'promotion' of the entity in question. (Note that in Maltese certain expressions like 'raġel', 'mara', 'tifel', 'tifla' can be used with the meanings, respectively, either of "man", "woman", "boy", "girl" or "husband", "wife", "son", "daughter").

As we saw in ch. 1, § 5.3, Sutcliffe talks about the determining function of certain adjectives : "An attributive adjective in agreement with a noun which is accompanied by the definite article itself takes the article only if the article is used with the noun to specify a particular

- |          |   |       |  |            |
|----------|---|-------|--|------------|
| 34.      | { | a. ?  | it- tifel il- kbir                     | ghaddej    |
|          |   |       | the boy    the big (masc.)             | he passing |
|          |   |       | "the big boy / the elder boy going by" |            |
| Ġanni ra | { | b.    | lit-tifel il-kbir                      | ghaddej    |
|          |   | c.    | il-kaxxa l-kbira fuq il-mejda          |            |
|          |   |       | "the big box on the table"             |            |
|          |   | d. ?x | lill-kaxxa l-kbira fuq il-mejda        |            |



In Maltese a nominal expression in which a noun is preceded by the definite article, can itself be preceded by a demonstrative adjective, in which case the overall definiteness is more marked. Correspondingly the absence of 'lil' is more strongly felt (cf. (35a) in contrast to (33a) and (34a)). The occurrence of 'lil' however is as unacceptable in (35d) as it is in (33d) and (34d).

Nominals in possessive constructions are also regarded as definite in Maltese. Here we will note two (not necessarily alternative) ways of expressing possession. In one case the nominal referring to the possessed referent is followed by the preposition 'ta'' followed by the nominal referring to the possessor. In the second case the nominals occur in this same order but without an intervening prepo-

- |          |   |       |   |
|----------|---|-------|---|
| 36.      | { | a. ?  | t- tifel ta' Pawlu / bin Pawlu<br>the boy of Paul son-of<br>"Paul's son" / "Paul's son" |
| Ġanni ra | { | b.    | lit-tifel ta' Pawlu / lil bin Pawlu   |
|          | { | c.    | il-kaxxa ta' Pawlu<br>"Paul's box"  |
|          | { | d. ?x | lill-kaxxa ta' Pawlu  |

sition, and usually there are morphophonemic changes associated with the form of the nominal referring to the possessed referent. In the case of 'tifel' and 'bin' in (36a) and (36b), note a distribution of 'lil' analogous



to that in (34a) and (34b). The occurrence of 'lil' in (36d) is again markedly odd. Note that 'bin' "son of" occurs only in very restricted contexts such as the one exemplified in (36), and with pronominal suffixes attached; otherwise 'tifel' is used for 'son'. Note also that the possessive construction of the second type is not possible in the case of 'kaxxa'.

37.            {    a. ?x        ibnu        ghaddej        mill-ghalqa  
                               son-his passing (masc.)  
 Ġanni ra    {                "his son going through the field"  
                               b.    lil    ibnu ghaddej mill-ghalqa

Possession can also be realised by suffixing a possessive pronoun to the nominal expression referring to the object possessed. In this case (cf. (37a)) the relationship between the possessor and the object possessed is more strongly encoded, so that the definiteness of the nominal referring to the object possessed is more strongly present. Correspondingly, the absence of 'lil' is more marked. Again this construction is not possible (in my speech) in the case of 'kaxxa'.

This discussion will have served to illustrate the effect of definiteness on the distribution of 'lil' in the context under consideration. Although the notion is relevant, it is, as we have seen, not neatly criterial but contributes to the hierarchization of first-order entities along a scale, rather than into a tight classification.



## 2.5 First and second-order entities and pronominalization

I conclude my discussion of the distinction between first and second-order entities and nominals by looking briefly at some instances of pronominalization in relation to the problem of the distribution of 'lil'.

We consider first pronominalization with a (type one : cf. ch. 2, § 1.3) transitive verb as in (38).

- |     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
| 38. | { | a. lil Marija<br>to Mary<br>b. lit- tifla<br>to the girl<br>c. it-tifla<br>d. il- kaxxa<br>the box<br>e. t- tragedja<br>the tragedy |
|-----|---|---|

i Ġanni ra

ii Ġanni raha

The expressions in (a) to (e) are ranged along different points in the hierarchy of first and second-order entities, so that 'lil' figures in (a) and (b) but not in (c) - (e). However when this nominal expression is pronominalized as in (38ii) the difference disappears : (38ii) in fact serves as the pronominalized version of each of the sentences in (38i).

Now as hinted at in ch. 1, § 5.6, in the case of verbs with an indirect object, when double pronominalization or pronominalization of the indirect object, takes place, the preposition 'lil' appears along with the suffixed pronouns. This possibility is examined further below, but with respect to pronominalization involving transitive verbs (Bonello's type one), we can say, in the light of (38) above, that the distinction between first and second-order entities is neutralised, in so far as the occurrence of the preposition is concerned.

Let us now look at pronominalization involving a (type two) transitive verb with an indirect object.

39. a. Ġanni baghat il- kaxxa lil Pawlu / l-uffiċċju  
       John he sent the box to Paul / the office  
       b. Ġanni baghatha lil Pawlu / l-uffiċċju  
           he sent her  
       c. Ġanni baghatlu l-kaxxa  
           he sent to him  
       d. Ġanni baghathielu  
           he sent her to him

In (39b) the direct object only is pronominalized. Note that both in (39a) and (39b) the preposition 'lil' does not figure before the place nominal (as we saw in an earlier section : cf. the sentences in (27ii), ch. 2, § 2.2). Now when the indirect object is pronominalized,

either alone as in (39c) or together with the direct object as in (39d) these sentences can only be understood as pronominalized versions of the sentences with the expression 'Pawlu' as indirect object. That is to say, a place nominal in indirect object position cannot be pronominalized (unless it is a nominal which can receive a 'personified' interpretation, as we saw in the case of the sentences in (27iii), ch. 2, § 2.2).

In a sense, the behaviour of 'lil' under pronominalization can be seen to correlate so far with many aspects of our preceding discussion in this section. But now observe the sentences in (40). (40c) is the version with

40. a. Ġanni ta            l- kaxxa lil Pawlu  
          John he gave the box to Paul  
       b. Ġanni taha            lil Pawlu  
                          he gave her  
       c. Ġanni tah            il-kaxxa  
                          he gave him  
       d. Ġanni tahiēlu  
                          he gave her to him

pronominalized indirect object as in (39c), but while the pronominal suffix is preceded by the preposition in (39c), in (40c) the suffix is attached directly to the verbal form (with consequent morphophonemic alternation : /h/ as opposed to /u/). Notice moreover that the version

with double pronominalization in (40d) is exactly parallel to that in (39d) : the preposition figures in both, and this makes the problem of the disappearance of 'lil' in (40c) even more acute, since semantically the relationship of the nominal expression 'lil Pawlu' to 'il-ktieb' and 'Ganni' remains the same throughout the four versions in (40). Clearly this is an area for further investigation which unfortunately we cannot go into here.

## 2.6 Verb valency

In our discussion of the context of occurrence of 'lil' we have spoken rather loosely of the direct object of a transitive verb and we have also considered examples in which 'lil' rather than occurring after the verb and before a nominal, occurs in between two nominals which follow a verb (cf. the sentences in (27i) - (27iii), ch. 2, § 2.2, and in (39) and (40) in the preceding section). We will need some syntactic classification of the verb in the course of our discussion (cf. especially, ch. 4, § 3) and I prepare for this here, by adopting the notion of valency (cf. Lyons, 1977, § 12.4). In so doing I reject Bonello's (1968, pp. II-11-14) subcategorization of the verb into Linking and non-Linking, Transitive and non-Transitive, Transitive first type and Transitive second type.

The distinction between linking and non-linking verbs will occupy us at a later stage (ch. ch. 5, § 5). Here

we are concerned with the rest of Bonello's classification which falls under the non-linking subcategory. If the verb is non-Transitive, he says, it is optionally accompanied by a Locative, or a Time adverbial or a Manner adverbial or any combination of them. This is the class of verbs we shall characterize as having a valency of 1. The optional elements mentioned by Bonello are non-nuclear expressions (again, cf. Lyons 1977, § 11.2, for the term) whose occurrence or absence does not affect the status of an utterance as a (simple) sentence. Bonello's transitive verbs of the first type "take only one Object which is always Direct":

we will characterize this class of verbs as having a valency of 2. Transitive verbs of the second type "can take two Objects, one Direct, the other non-Direct". In our terminology this class of verbs has a valency of 3.

However it is obvious that there is a considerable degree of interdependence between the meaning of a verb and its valency, so that really this concept covers more than simply the number of expressions with which a verb may or must be combined in a well-formed sentence-nucleus. It is also intended to account for differences in the membership of the sets of expressions that may be combined with different verbs (cf. Lyons 1977, § 12.4). The verbs 'baghat' "he sent" and 'ta' "he gave" mentioned in the previous section both have a valency of 3, but the difference in the distribution of 'lil' under pronominalization which

we noted (ch. 2, § 2.5) could be an indication that they differ with respect to one or more of the expressions they govern. If this were the case the two verbs would be said to differ in valency and to be associated with two distinct valency-sets.

## CHAPTER THREE

## 1. Verbal derivational morphology

We have now paved the way sufficiently to attempt to tackle some of the problems connected with Maltese derivational morphology. We approach this question by considering the derived forms associated with the first form verb 'mexa' "he walked".

## 1.1 The causative

In (1b) 'mexxa' is the second form verb derived from 'mexa'. We have already looked at what Sutcliffe says of this form of the verb (cf. ch.1, § 2.2.1). Just as I did

1. a. Ġanni mexa            mid-            dar    sa l-    iskola  
       John he walked from the house to the school  
       "John walked from home to school"
- b. Pawlu mexxa                            'l Ġanni mid-dar  
       Paul he walked (trans.) to John  
       "Paul walked John from home
- sa l-iskola  
       to school"

in ch. 1, so too, in the present section I simply assume that the causative, rather than the intensive, meaning is primary for this form (some justification for this view

will be attempted in ch. 3, § 1.5). In any case the problem of choosing between the two alternatives does not arise in the case of the derivation of this particular verbal lexeme 'mexxa' from 'mexa' which falls in Sutcliffe's class "Verbs with causal force from intransitive verbs".

Cremona too (1962, pp. 40, ff.) recognises the causativizing nature (among other notions) of the derivational process associated with the second form of the verb.

At this point I want to pause briefly on Zammit Mangion's treatment of second form verbs (she also considers 'mexxa'), and specifically to consider her claim that there is a semantic difference between a sentence containing the verb in the second form 'mexxa' (which she refers to as the conflated version) eg.,

Ganni mexxa t-tifel

"John walked the boy"

and a sentence in which

It-tifel mexa

"The boy walked"

is subordinated to a superordinate clause containing a subject 'Ganni' and a verb of causation 'gieghel' as in

Ganni gieghel                      lit-    tifel jimxi    hames mili  
he forced / caused to the boy he walks five miles

"John made the boy walk five miles"

We shall be looking at the verb of causation below. At this stage of the research I do not want to commit myself on



such possible differences of meaning as emphasis, or the distinction between direct and indirect causation in the conflated and unconflated versions. At the same time I firmly reject Zammit Mangion's claim (1977, pp. 222-223) that "in the conflated variant... we know that John himself walked with the boy, while in the second [ie. the unconflated variant with the lexicalization of a verb of causation] we only know that he made him walk. There is no reference to John's presence". In my view both variants are neutral with respect to whether John walks with the boy or not, as can be seen from the following two sentences.

2. a. Ġanni mexxa lit- tifel hames mili billi  
           he walked to the boy five miles by that  
       "John made the boy walk five miles by

baghtu qadja...  
 he sent him an errand  
 sending him on an errand"

- b. Ġanni ġieghel lit- tifel jimxi hames mili  
           he made to the boy he walks five miles  
       "John made the boy walk five miles

billi kaxkru warajh  
 by that he dragged him behind him  
 by dragging him along with him"

In (2a), from which we are supposed to "know that John himself walked with the boy", John's walking is excluded

by the context (John sends the boy and does not accompany him). In (2b) on the other hand in which there is supposed to be "no reference to John's presence" we know from the context that John is walking too.

Let us now turn to a consideration of the meaning of (1b). It is clear that just as mexxa is related to mexa derivationally, so the meaning of 'mexxa' is related to that of 'mexa'. In the case of 'mexa' in (1a) the entity referred to by the grammatical subject accomplishes the journey of walking, while with 'mexxa' in (1b) the entity referred to by the grammatical subject brings about another entity's journey of walking : "an animate entity, X, intentionally and responsibly uses its own force, or energy, to bring about an event or to initiate a process; and the paradigm instance of an event or a process in which agency is most obviously involved will be one that results in a change in the physical condition or location of X or of some other entity Y" (Lyons 1977, § 12.4).

Notice that according to this definition agency is involved in both 'mexa' and 'mexxa' but we will limit ourselves for the moment to a consideration of the agency involved in 'mexxa' in which X brings about a change in the physical condition or location of entity Y.

The semantic structure for causative verbs has been discussed in the literature especially in relation to the

verb 'kill' : "According to what is probably the most widely accepted formulation of this hypothesis, both the valency and the meaning of the transitive verb 'kill', for example, would be accounted for in terms of the embedding of an intransitive structure containing the verb 'die' (more precisely, a complex predicator meaning "come-to-be-not-alive") as the object of the abstract verb CAUSE... Its subject in the underlying semantic representation would be a nominal referring to the agent; and its object — the embedded intransitive structure (with its own subject and predicate) — would refer to the situation that is brought into being as a result of the agent's activity. Letting DIE stand for the complex predicate (meaning "come-to-be-not-alive") which occurs in the embedded complement of CAUSE, we can say that X CAUSE (Y, DIE) is transformed into X CAUSE-DIE Y by an operation of pre-lexical predicate raising and that CAUSE-DIE is lexicalised as 'kill'" (Lyons 1977, § 12.5).

But what of the notion itself of causativity? "The abstract predicator CAUSE... takes a first-order nominal in its subject and a second-order nominal as its object (or complement). It most naturally reflects, therefore, the notion of causality, according to which agents are seen as the causes of the situations which by their actions, they bring into existence. But one can also talk... of one situation causing another, and this involves a some-

what different conception of causality, which is compatible with, but does not presuppose agency... Causativity involves both causality and agency (in so far as they are, in fact, distinguishable). It also depends upon the fact that the distinction between a single temporally extended situation and two distinct, but causally connected, situations is not something that is given in nature as it were... It is important to realize... that the situation described by X killed Y ... can be analyzed in terms of two different valency-schemata. Looked at from one point of view, 'kill' is what we will call an operative verb : killing is an operation that is performed upon, and affects the patient. Looked at from another point of view, it is what is commonly called a factitive verb : it denotes a process or event whereby a cause produces an effect (or result). The two schemata, therefore, in terms of which we can analyze the situation of X's killing Y are:

- |             |                  |             |
|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| (1) AFFECT  | (AGENT, PATIENT) | (operative) |
| (2) PRODUCE | (CAUSE, EFFECT)  | (factitive) |

Furthermore, by virtue of the connexion between agency and causality, we have a third possible schema, which combines elements of both (1) and (2). This is

- |             |                 |                       |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| (3) PRODUCE | (AGENT, EFFECT) | (operative-factitive) |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------|

It is easy to see that in what we have taken to be paradigm instances of agentive situations (ie. those in which the action results in a change in the physical condition or location of the patient) all three schemata are relevant.

It is also easy to see that the causative account of the valency and meaning of 'kill' (in which CAUSE is an abstract predicator, rather than a nominal referring to a second-order entity, as it is in (2)) is closer to (3) than to either of the others. What was represented earlier, rather loosely, as X CAUSE (Y, DIE) can be reformulated as PRODUCE (X, DIE (Y)), where X is the agent and (DIE (Y)) refers to the second-order entity (Y's death) which is the effect, or result, of X's action. But the proposition expressed by 'X killed Y' can also be understood as saying that X did something to Y : ie. it can be understood as an instance of AFFECT (AGENT, PATIENT)" (Lyons 1977, § 12.5).

In the light of what has just been said observe now the sentences in (3). It will be seen that 'mexxa' in (3i)

- 3.
- |               |   |  |
|---------------|---|--|
| i Ganni mexxa | { | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 'l Pawlu (to Paul)</li> <li>b. <del>x</del> Pawlu</li> <li>c. lit-tifel (to the boy)</li> <li>d. it-tifel</li> <li>e. ? lill-kelb (to the dog)</li> <li>f. il-kelb</li> <li>g. <del>x</del> lill- qtil ta' Pawlu<br/>to the killing of Paul</li> <li>h. il-qtil ta' Pawlu<br/>"Paul's murder"</li> </ul> |
|---------------|---|--|

- 3.
- ii Ġanni ġieghel {
- a. 'l Pawlu jimxi (to Paul he walks)
  - b. lit-tifel jimxi (to the boy he walks)
  - c. it-tifel jimxi
  - d. il-kelb jimxi (the dog he walks)
  - e. \* l-inċident ġigri (the accident  
he happens)
  - f. \* il-qtil ta' Pawlu

can have as its object either a first or a second-order nominal. (ia) - (ih) exemplify the occurrence of nominals from different points along the cline between first and second-order entities. Now compare (3ii) with (3iii).

- 3.
- iii Ġanni kkawża  
he caused {
- a. \* 'il Pawlu (jimxi)
  - b. \* lit-tifel (jimxi)
  - c. \* it-tifel (jimxi)
  - d. \* il-kelb (jimxi)
  - e. l-inċident
  - f. il-qtil ta' Pawlu

The verb in (3ii) is the same verb of causation mentioned earlier in connection with Zammit Mangion's unconfated variant of 'Ġanni mexxa t-tifel'. From these sentences it appears that 'ġieghel' cannot have a second-order nominal for object : the unacceptability of (iie) and (iif) has nothing to do with the distribution of 'lil'. The verb in (3iii) has a meaning which also has to do with causation, but as can be seen from these sentences it can only take

a second-order nominal for object (There is a third verb in my speech, 'ikkaguna', but as far as I can make out, its distribution is similar to that of 'ikkawza' at least in the contexts under discussion, and for present purposes, I pass it by).

It seems therefore that 'mexxa' is ambivalent with respect to the operative schema AFFECT (AGENT, PATIENT) and the operative-factitive one PRODUCE (AGENT, EFFECT), but that 'gieghel' is associated only with the operative schema and 'ikkawza' with the operative-factitive one, granted that a 'patient' is typically a first-order entity and an 'effect' a second-order one. But there is more to the difference between these two verbs of causation. In (3ii), the object is followed by another clause which appears to be nuclear since \*'Ganni gieghel l-incident' or \*'Ganni gieghel 'il Pawlu' are not acceptable. Even in certain contexts where the direct object in pronominalized form is suffixed to this verb, some clause is still understood to be elliptically present. On the other hand a sentence like \*'Ganni kkawza l-incident jigri' is also unacceptable. In other words it would appear that 'gieghel' has a valency of 3, while 'ikkawza' has a valency of 2. This difference could be interpreted as supporting the claim, hinted at in the preceding paragraph, that 'gieghel' encodes operative causativity, in which the patient is encoded as already existing and then acted upon by the



agent, while 'ikkawza' encodes, at least typically, operative-factitive causativity, in which the activity of the agent results in the coming into existence of an effect.

Before proceeding with the discussion of 'mexxa' let me pause briefly on another question relating to the pair of verbs we have just been looking at. As we saw earlier, Lyons draws a distinction between causality which presupposes agency and causality which does not (as in the case of one situation being encoded as causing another). It would be beyond the scope of the present work to examine whether this distinction is operative in Maltese; all I can do here is point out that, at least in relation to the two verbs of causation we have mentioned, the distinction in question does not seem to obtain. In the sentences in

4. a. Ix- xorb      bla      rażan      ġieghel      'il  
          the drinking without control he caused to  
          "Unrestrained drinking caused

Pawlu jitlef l- impieg tieghu  
 Paul he loses the job      his  
 Paul to lose his job"

- b.x Is- sakra      tas-      sewwieq      ġieghlet  
          the drunkenness of the driver she caused  
          "The drunken state of the driver caused

l- incident  
 the accident  
 the accident"



4. c.x Ix-xorb bla rażan ikkawża 'l Pawlu (jitlef  
l-impieg tieghu)  
d. Is-sakra tas-sewwieg ikkawżat l-incident

(4) 'gieghel' can have a second-order nominal for subject as in (4a), but the restriction on its object having to be a first-order nominal still holds - cf. (4b). Similarly 'ikkawza' can have a second-order nominal for subject, but the restriction on its object having to be a second-order nominal still holds. In the light of this discussion therefore we ignore valency schema (2).

If it is granted that 'gieghel' encodes operative causativity and 'ikkawza' operative-factitive causativity, then this raises a further question with respect to the ambivalence of 'mexxa' and the distribution of 'lil' as noted in connection with the sentences in (3i). Let us consider first one extreme : that having to do with operative-factitive causativity and second-order nominals proper. The sentence in (3ih) reproduced here as (5) can plausibly be interpreted in an operative-factitive way :

5. Ganni mexxa 1- qtil ta' Pawlu  
John he walked (trans.) the killing of Paul  
"John led the killing of Paul"

John brings about the killing or murder of Paul: (5) can easily be translated as "John masterminded the killing of

Paul" or "John was the driving force behind the killing of Paul", so that 'il-qtil ta' Pawlu' can in fact be regarded as an 'object of result', or in terms of the valency schema we quoted earlier, the 'effect' 'produced' by the 'agent', John.

At the other extreme, with the first-order nominal par excellence (a proper name referring to a person), it is clear that 'il Pawlu' in (3ia), reproduced here as (6), has to be an expression referring to an entity which already exists prior to John's acting upon it.

6. Ġanni mexxa                      'il Pawlu  
      John he walked (trans.) to Paul  
      "John walked Paul"

If these had been the only two types of cases which occur in Maltese in connection with causativity and the distribution of 'lil' (obligatorily present in operative causativity, as in (6), and obligatorily absent in operative-factitive causativity, as in (5)), then a case could perhaps be made for applying the proposal tentatively put forward in ch. 2, § 2, (namely a semantic justification for the distribution of 'lil' with first and second-order entities in terms of its meaning as a directional preposition) also in the case of causativity. The argument would follow similar lines : in operative-factitive causativity the act of causation cannot travel anywhere since not only

is the object a second-order nominal (and hence located in time and not in space) but also, it still has to come into existence; in operative causativity on the other hand, the entity acted upon has to be in existence prior to being acted upon. Not only<sup>that</sup>, but in order that an agent might operate upon it, it has to have spatio-temporal continuity; and besides, as a first-order entity, it is located in space, so that the act of (operative) causation has to travel, and hence the presence of the directional preposition.

But now notice the other sentences in (3i), reproduced

- 7.
- Ganni mexxa {
- a. lit-tifel (to the boy)
  - b. it-tifel (the boy)
  - c.? lill-kelb (to the dog)
  - d. il-kelb (the dog)

here as (7a) - (7d). Are we to say that depending on the occurrence or absence of 'lil' we have instances of different causativity? Both (7a) and (7b) mean "John walked the boy" and both (7c) and (7d) mean "John walked the dog". In each case, irrespective of the occurrence of 'lil', the entity referred to by the direct object of the verb is understood as existing prior to being operated upon by John.

Let us leave the sentences in (7) for the moment and turn to consider those in (8). In (ia) - (ih) we have

8.

i Alla halaq  
God he created  
"God created"

- a. lil Adam  
to Adam
- b. x Adam
- c. lill- bniedem  
to the man
- d. il-bniedem
- e. ? lid- dinja  
to the world
- f. id-dinja
- g. x lill- istorja tas- salvazzjoni  
to the story of the salvation
- h. l-istorja tas-salvazzjoni  
"salvation history"

ii Ġanni jaf  
John he knows  
"John knows"

- a. 'il Marija  
to Mary
- b. x Marija
- c. lill- istudenti kollha  
to the students all
- d. l-istudenti kollha  
"all the students"
- e. x lill- istorja  
to the story
- f. l-istorja

the factitive verb 'halaq' "he created". Now, by the very nature of the lexical meaning of this verb, its direct object does not exist prior to its being brought into

8.

iii Ġanni jixbah

John he resembles

"John resembles"

a. 'il Pawlu

to Paul

b. ~~x~~ Pawlu

c. lit- tifel ta' Pawlu

to the boy of Paul

"Paul's son"

d. It-tifel ta' Pawlu

iv Din iċ- ċajta tixbah

this the joke she resembles

"This joke is like"

a. ~~x~~ lill- istorja ta'

to the story of

Kolombu u

Columbus and

l- bajda

the egg

b. l-istorja ta'

"the story about

Kolombu u l-bajda

Columbus and the egg"

existence in the very same event encoded by the sentence. Yet an examination of these sentences in (i) will show that the distribution of 'lil' follows the pattern we are now familiar with : in other words there can be no question in this case that the causativity involved in the creation of a first-order entity is essentially the same causativity involved in the creation of a second-order entity, and yet 'lil' occurs before the former but not before the latter.

The verbs in (ii), (iii) and (iv) are commonly called stative. In Maltese they stand apart from other verbs because they are both members of a tiny subclass of verb lexemes which are realised only by an Imperfect form (cf. ch. 5 for some comment on this) and this peculiarity would tend to justify their classification as stative verbs in Maltese too. And yet, once again we are confronted with the same pattern of the distribution of 'lil'.

If in addition to the factitive and stative verbs we have just looked at, we take into consideration also the verbs of perception 'ra' "he saw" and 'sema' "he heard" (cf. the sentences in (25), ch. 2, § 2), as well as the causative 'mexxa' "he walked (trans.)" we have been discussing, it will be seen that in so far as the distribution of 'lil' is concerned, all the semantic differences are neutralized with the exception of the distinction between first and second-order entities, to which the occurrence of 'lil' is sensitive.

So even if one were to grant the semantic justification for the distribution of 'lil' at least in the extreme cases of operative causativity with person-referring first-order nominals (cf. sentence (6)) and operative-factitive causativity with second-order nominals proper (cf. sentence (5)), it is hardly realistic to generalise such a semantic justification to every occurrence of 'lil' (in the syntactic contexts under consideration). Zammit Mangion (1977, p. 92)

notes : "Rather early in his education, the language learner is taught that a transitive verb is one in which the 'action passes from the subject to the object', while in an intransitive verb the 'action' is 'restricted' to the subject. But what action is supposed to 'pass over' from subject to object in 'Toni ra lil Ġanni' ("Tony saw John")?"

Rather than speculate on the possible effects Maltese might have on the ontology of a native speaker, it might perhaps be best to regard the occurrence of 'lil' in the contexts under consideration as an extension of a 'favourite construction type' and accept the possibility that the correlation between syntax and semantics is not a perfect one (cf. Lyons 1977, §§ 11.2 and 12.6).

Let us return for a moment to the sentences in (3). In examining these sentences we noted that 'mexxa' is seemingly ambivalent with respect to the operative schema (1) AFFECT (AGENT, PATIENT) and the operative-factitive one (3) PRODUCE (AGENT, EFFECT). But this does not mean that we have to postulate two related but distinguishable senses for 'mexxa'. Rather, the difference between operative and operative-factitive causativity can be seen as proceeding from the overall structure of the proposition encoded in a given (causative) sentence, where the one sense of the verb interacts with a first or second-order nominal. Notice furthermore that beyond the question of a



distinction in causativity, in either case the derivational morphology lands us with a verb lexeme in which the agent comes to the fore as it were : notice that the schemata (1) and (3) both share the argument AGENT in spite of their other differences (cf. ch. 4, § 2 where this point will be taken up again).

A question which remains to be answered is whether the kind of analysis we have looked at for 'mexxa', could be brought within the framework with which we are working in this study, namely the localistic notion of a journey. In his discussion of the valency of verbs of motion Lyons (1977, § 12.6) adds the following schemata to the ones we saw earlier:

(4) MOVE (ENTITY, SOURCE)

(5) MOVE (ENTITY, GOAL)

and since all locomotion necessarily involves both a source and a goal, (4) and (5) are combined to yield (6):

(6) MOVE (ENTITY, SOURCE, GOAL)

Furthermore, since an entity may be moved from its source-location to its goal-location by an agent, the situation described by either (4) or (5), or both, may be treated as the effect in an operative-factitive schema

(3a) PRODUCE (AGENT, (MOVE (ENTITY, SOURCE)))

(3b) PRODUCE (AGENT, (MOVE (ENTITY, GOAL)))

(3c) PRODUCE (AGENT, (MOVE (ENTITY, SOURCE, GOAL)))

Now it can easily be seen that the valency schemata (6) tallies with our discussion of the journey paradigm in



ch. 1, § 1, the argument ENTITY in (6) occupying a traveller role in my treatment. Lyons continues : "At first sight, there would appear to be a sharp distinction between a situation in which one entity affects another entity and a situation in which an entity moves to or from a place. But such transitive verbs as 'hit' and 'kill' which we have associated with (1) and (3) respectively [although Lyons notes earlier that 'kill' could be interpreted in terms of both the valency schema (1) and (3) and as such is ambivalent, the reference here is to the assignment of (3) to 'kill'; 'hit' on the other hand is not regarded as ambivalent with respect to (1) and (3)] are traditionally described in terms which suggest that the agent is the source of the action and that the patient is its goal. Indeed, the very term 'transitive' derives from this conception of the way the agent not only operates upon, but directs his action at, the patient; and, as far as verbs like 'hit' (or 'grasp') are concerned, the traditional association of transitivity with goal-directed activity is clearly quite appropriate. The entity that is referred to by means of the expression that functions syntactically as the direct object is both the patient, which (as traditional terminology puts it) suffers the effect of the action, and also the goal of movement. Just as there are verbs that are ambivalent with respect to (1) and (3), so there are verbs that are ambivalent with respect to (1) and (6) or (3) and (6). For example, John's hitting Bill

can be seen in terms of John's movement towards Bill (or of John's first moving away from him towards Bill). It can also be seen, however, in terms of John's action being the cause of whatever effect is produced in Bill. In so far as verbs like 'hit' are typical of the class of transitive verbs taken as a whole, there is therefore a natural connexion between agency, causation and the source of movement, on the one hand, and between suffering the effect of an action and being the goal of movement, on the other hand".

Coming back now to the sentence in (1b) (reproduced here as (9)) which we started out with in this section,

9. Pawlu mexxa 'l Ġanni mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "Paul walked John from home to school"

we can easily associate with it the valency schema (3c).

(3c) PRODUCE (AGENT, (MOVE (ENTITY, SOURCE, GOAL)))

In (9) John is not encoded as responsible for his journey of walking, rather he is presented as an entity moving from a source to a goal. This means that even if we speak of John as fulfilling a traveller role, the responsibility for his journey lies elsewhere - with Paul.

For my purposes however I do not wish to go into the question of deciding whether Paul's causation is to be treated as a case of operative-factivity (as in the schema

in (3c), where John's journey is the effect produced by the agent) or of operative causativity, in which case Paul would be seen as operating upon, or affecting John in such a way that John undertakes the journey. Still in the light of the preceding remarks about the connexion between agency, causation and the source of movement and between suffering the effect of an action and being the goal of movement, we can see that there are two journeys involved in (9) : one is the concrete journey of John from a source to a goal (in which John occupies the traveller role), the other is the journey involving causation emerging as it were, from Paul. In this latter, abstract journey, the traveller role is occupied by the abstract noun 'causation' (cf. ch. 1, § 3), while Paul, the agent, occupies a source role. If the causativity is interpreted as one involving operativity, then John occupies a goal role in the abstract journey of causation. This is why we allowed for the possibility in ch. 1, § 3, of a single nominal being associated with more than one role in underlying structure, since John also occupies the traveller role in the concrete journey of movement.

Finally, in view of the discussion in the next section, note that with respect to the causative verb under consideration, the source role in the abstract journey (or the superordinate sentence) is occupied by an entity which is different from the entity occupying the traveller role in the concrete journey (or the subordinate sentence) : i.e. the two roles are occupied by two different entities.

## 1.2 The reflexive causative

In discussing the sentences in (1) in the preceding section (§1.1) we noted that in the light of Lyons' definition of agency quoted there, the notion was associated not only with the second form verb 'mexxa' but also with the first form verb 'mexa' as in the sentence in (1a) reproduced here as (10) : John intentionally and respons-

10. Ġanni mexa            mid-            dar    sa l-    iskola  
       John   he walked from the home to the school  
       "John walked from home to school"

ibly uses his own force or energy to bring about a change in his location.

In the light of the previous discussion of the causative verb 'mexxa' we can now see that in (10) John is both the agent who produces an effect (the movement of an entity; or alternatively, who operates on an entity in such a way as to bring about its movement) and the entity which moves : that is, in (10) John fulfils not only the roles fulfilled by John in (9) (the traveller, and possibly, the goal role) but also the source role fulfilled by Paul. This means that 'mexa' in (10) encodes an underlying structure in which John acts upon himself, hence the term 'reflexive causative' applied to this verb.

In traditional treatments of Maltese, a verb like

'mexa' is considered to be intransitive but from the preceding discussion we can see that semantically it is associated with two different roles like 'mexxa', the difference residing in the identity of the entities occupying these roles in the case of 'mexa'. Syntactically however it still has a valency of 1, like say the verb 'miet' "he died". But such a resemblance is syntactic, not semantic. The grammatical subject of the verb 'miet' fulfills a traveller role, going from a source (life) to a goal (death), but in the paradigm instance of a journey of dying one can hardly attribute agency to the traveller, as we did for the sentence in (10) (cf. ch. 3, § 1.5 for some more discussion of this and related matters).

### 1.3 The passive causative

In chapter 1, § 2, it was pointed out that there is yet another verb, derivationally related to 'mexa', and this is exemplified in (11). In this sentence John plays

11. Ġanni tmexxa                      mid-              dar      sa l-  
       John he was walked from the house to the  
       "John was led from home to

iskola (minn Pawlu)  
 school (from Paul)  
 school (by Paul)"

a traveller role : he is the entity which moves from a source to a goal. But at the same time, one understands from (11) that the responsibility for the movement of the traveller is not John's. Even if the initiating agent were not specified - notice that the expression referring to the agent, Paul, is enclosed within parentheses to indicate that it is merely a non-nuclear adjunct - one would understand just the same that John was acted upon in such a way that his movement ensued. This is tantamount to saying that (11) encodes John both as a traveller (in the concrete journey of movement) and as a patient or goal (in the abstract journey of causation). At the same time the source of the abstract journey of causation is now extra-nuclear and in fact in sentences in which a verb of the fifth, sixth or seventh form is used, the agent is often left unspecified. Notice also that in the extra-nuclear expression referring to the agent, the noun is preceded by the preposition 'minn', the same preposition which precedes the source, in a concrete journey of movement, and indeed the same preposition which marks the source of John's movement in (11) - 'mid-dar'. This point does not escape Sutcliffe ("minn... also signifies the agent", 1936, p. 204; cf. also p. 163) and Zammit Mangion ("minn is the ergative preposition", 1977, p. 149) and reinforces the point, quoted earlier from Lyons (cf. ch. 3, § 1.1), about the natural connexion between agency, causation and the source of movement.

Now in talking about the fifth form verb 'tmexxa' we can also consider the sixth and seventh forms. From Sutcliffe's remarks about each of these forms respectively (cf. ch. 1, §§ 2.2.4 - 2.2.6) it will be seen that they have a lot in common as far as meaning is concerned : indeed Sutcliffe himself groups them together in talking about the passive in Maltese (cf. ch. 1, § 2.7). For the moment, I assume the semantic equivalence of these three forms and will talk of the fifth form verb 'tmexxa', taking it to represent all three for my immediate purposes.

We noted in (11) that when the expression referring to the agent is demoted to non-nuclear status, 'minn' occurs before the noun. However the preposition does not appear before the agent when the expression referring to it has nuclear status, as in the causative (second form) verb 'mexxa' exemplified in the sentence in (6) (cf. ch. 3, § 1.1). Correspondingly, note that in (11) the expression referring to the patient (ie. John, who also fulfills the traveller role in the (subordinate) concrete journey of movement) 'lil' does not figure, although it is obligatorily present in the causative sentence in (6) : cf. the sentences

12. i a. Ġanni mexxa 'l Pawlu

he walked to

b. x minn Ġanni mexxa 'l Pawlu

c. x Ġanni mexxa Pawlu



12. ii a. Ġanni tmexxa (minn Pawlu)

he was walked from

b.x lil Ġanni tmexxa (minn Pawlu)

c.x Ġanni tmexxa (Pawlu)

in (12) for an illustration of these points. If we restrict ourselves to the difference between causative and passive sentences which contain a second form verb and a fifth form verb respectively, we can say that the second form verb allows the agent to be the grammatical subject of the sentence (while the patient, though not a subject, is still nuclear), and the fifth form verb, on the other hand, allows the patient to be the grammatical subject of the sentence (and the agent is demoted to non-nuclear status).

Now grammatical subjecthood can scarcely depend on word order in Maltese (cf. ch. 1, § 5.2), but just the same, there is one criterion we could apply to determine which expression is the grammatical subject in a given sentence, at least in the type of sentence we are considering here (that is, one in which a second form or a fifth form verb occurs). The subject and the verb display concord, realized via inflection, as in the sentences in

13. i a. Ġanni mexxa

he walked (trans.; masc.)

b. Marija mexxiet

she walked (trans.; fem.)

} 'l Pawlu



- |           |                       |   |              |
|-----------|-----------------------|---|--------------|
| 13. ii a. | Ġanni tmexxa          | } | (minn Pawlu) |
|           | he was walked (masc.) |   |              |
| b.        | Marija tmexxiet       |   |              |
|           | she was walked (fem.) |   |              |

(13). Sutcliffe however mentions also two other constructions which express passivity (cf. ch. 1, § 2.7). I will briefly exemplify them here, together with two other constructions which he doesn't mention (at least, not explicitly: there seems to be a slight hint in a short chapter entitled "Syntax of the Sentence", pp. 210-213).

14. a. Ġanni kien maqtul (minn Pawlu)  
           he was he killed
- b. Ġanni ġie maqtul (minn Pawlu)  
           he came
- c. Ġanni, Pawlu qatlu  
       John, Paul he killed him
- d. Ġanni qatluh  
       John they killed him  
       "John was killed"

In this part of the discussion I am interested in throwing some light on the notion of grammatical subjecthood in relation to the distinction between agent and patient expressions. I will talk here, therefore, largely about the syntax of the sentences in (14), rather than their semantics.

(14a) and (14b) have some elements in common : the form magtul is a so-called past participle (cf. ch. 1, § 2.5.2), and both sentences have what Sutcliffe calls an auxiliary verb, displaying concord with the patient, John. Indeed not only the verb, but also the participle agrees in number and gender with 'Ġanni'. Also, in both sentences the agent expression is non-nuclear.

Now observe the sentence in (14c). The patient expression occurs in initial position, followed by the agent expression displaying concord with the verb, which in this case, is in the third person singular masculine form. Although both 'Ġanni' and 'Pawlu' are grammatically third person singular and masculine, there is no ambiguity with respect to the question of who killed whom. But notice further that a third person singular masculine pronoun is suffixed to the verb, and again there is no ambiguity as to whom the pronoun refers, namely John, the patient. Of the verb in (14c) we can say that it displays both subject and object concord. Notice finally that in (14c) the agent expression is nuclear.

In (14d) we again have object concord via the suffixation to the verb of a third person singular masculine pronoun (/ -u/ and / -h/ are two allomorphs in complementary distribution, cf. ch. 1, § 5.6). But the verb in this sentence is obligatorily in the third person plural form : apart from this inflection there is no nuclear expression referring to the agent.

15. a. \* Lil Ġanni kien maqtul (minn Pawlu)  
 b. \* Lil Ġanni ġie maqtul (minn Pawlu)  
 c. Lil Ġanni, Pawlu qatlu  
 d. Lil Ġanni, qatluh

The sentences in (15) show that there is a further difference between (14a) and (14b) on the one hand, and (14c) and (14d) on the other : 'lil' can occur before the patient expression in the latter, but not in the former. If the sentences in (15) are compared with (2b) (reproduced here as (16)), it will be seen that the sentences with the

16. \* lil Ġanni tmexxa (minn Pawlu)

construction involving a so-called auxiliary verb and the past participle follow the morphologically marked passive verb in (16) in not allowing the presence of 'lil' before the (grammatical subject and) patient.

The foregoing discussion will have demonstrated some of the difficulties involved in an attempt to arrive at a formal characterization of 'passivity'. If the criterion of grammatical subjecthood (via concord) of the patient and the corresponding non-nuclear status of the agent is followed, this excludes the construction in (14c) in which the agent is nuclear, but it is not clear whether (14d) is excluded, since really no agent is specified.

On the other hand it might be held that all the

sentences in (14) as well as the one in (11) have one thing in common : the patient expression occurs in initial position. In fact however this does not amount to much since as we have already seen, there is great freedom in the possibilities of word order combinations : in this respect only the construction in (14c) seems to have considerable constraints on the order of its constituents (in ways in which we cannot go into here).

So for my purposes I will use the term 'passive causative' rather loosely to refer to verbs (or better, to sentences) which encode a given situation in such a way that attention is focused on the patient as patient, with the clear implication, that is, that the entity referred to by the patient expression, is encoded as operated upon. And in any case, the patient expression is treated as nuclear. The agent on the other hand is given a relatively unimportant status, is typically non-nuclear, and is often not explicitly encoded at all.

Before returning to a consideration of Sutcliffe's remarks quoted in chapter one, I want to take a look at what Cremona (1962, p. 41) has to say about the subject. In speaking about the difference between the active and the passive voice he introduces a distinction in the latter which he illustrates with verbs from the seventh form. Now as can be seen from ch. 1, § 2.2.6, seventh form verbs are derived directly from first form verbs by the prefixa-

tion of the formative n-. In this they differ from fifth and sixth form verbs which are directly derived from second and third form verbs respectively by the prefixation of the formative t-. We will be having a closer look at some of these and related questions in ch. 3, § 1.5, but for the moment note that the passivizing morphology operates in each instance on a verb which is already transitive : with reference to the verb of walking we have been looking at, the syntactically monovalent 'mexa' "he walked" is first turned into the bivalent 'mexxa' "he walked (trans.)" by a causativizing derivational process and then this verb in its turn is operated upon by the passivizing derivational process to give 'tmexxa' "he was walked". In the case of the seventh form, however, the passivizing morphology operates directly on first form verbs which are already transitive, eg. 'nhasel' "he was washed" from 'hasel' "he washed (trans.)".

Cremona says (in my own, somewhat literal, translation) "when the person or the thing which shows the subject is said to suffer something from a person or from a thing, the verb is said to be in the passive voice. The subject in the passive voice is therefore either the object of the agent (personal passive) or the abstract concept of the action (impersonal passive)". For an example of a personal passive he gives the sentence in (15) in which the seventh form verb 'insteraq' occurs ('nsteraq' is derived from

15. Il- flus insterqu mill- halliel  
 the money they were stolen from the thief  
 "The money was stolen by the thief"

'seraq' "he stole". The additional affix -t- is merely a variant of the seventh form formative n-, cf. Sutcliffe 1936, pp. 92-95). His example for the impersonal passive is

16. Inqalbet mejda  
 she was overturned a table  
 "A table overturned"

Here the seventh form verb 'nqaleb' is derived from the first form verb 'qaleb' "he overturned". On the following page (Cremona 1962, p. 42) he says that the impersonal verb is one in which "it is not said where the beginning of the action expressed by the verb comes from, and therefore it is a verb without a subject".

It seems from the above that Cremona is drawing a distinction between sentences in which the agent is encoded explicitly (but as an extra-nuclear adjunct) and those in which it is not encoded at all (but the form of the verb is the same as in the preceding case, so that the sentence in (16) is agentless). Cremona however uses terminology which is somewhat unclear and confusing. Both 'il-flus' in his 'personal passive' in (15) and 'mejda' in his 'impersonal passive' in (16) are the grammatical subjects of their sentences respectively (cf. the remarks above

about concord between the verb and the subject). It is misleading of Cremona to say, without further qualification, that the verb in an impersonal passive is one without a subject : certainly it is one with at least a grammatical subject.

Furthermore in the earlier quotation from Cremona, the subject in a sentence with an impersonal passive is said to be "the abstract concept of the action". Presumably therefore the subject in (16) is the notion of 'overturning'. Even if this analysis had any validity, it is clear that this would be contradicted anyway by Cremona's later observation that an impersonal passive verb lacks a subject.

Finally, in the first quotation, while he is using the term 'subject' in a sense roughly equivalent to that of 'grammatical subject', in the same sentence he uses the term 'object' ("... the object of the agent...") to mean 'patient' or 'logical object' (cf. Lyons 1977, § 12.7), besides possibly, 'grammatical object'. That is, he seems to be talking here about semantic roles rather than the syntactic function of a noun in the surface structure.

Coming back to Sutcliffe's views on the passive quoted in chapter one, § 2.7 it is not clear what he has in mind when he uses the term 'passive voice' since he doesn't qualify his remarks further in this respect and since, as we have seen, there are morphological as well



as syntactic means for expressing, roughly, "passivity" in Maltese (cf. the discussion above in connection with my use of the term 'passive causative').

Here we will restrict ourselves to Sutcliffe's remarks about the fifth, sixth and seventh forms (cf. ch. 1, §§ 2.2.4 - 2.2.6). Notice that all these forms share the characterizations 'reflexive', 'passive' and 'effective'. (We ignore here the 'indirect reflexive' which comes up in connection with the fifth form and the 'reciprocal' characterization shared by the fifth and sixth forms). "By effective force", Sutcliffe says, "is meant that an effect is signified as produced on the subject but without indication whether the effect was produced by another agent [which would make it, in his terms, a passive] or whether it was due to the subject itself [in his terms, a reflexive]" (cf. ch. 1, § 2.2.4). Notice that this classification is further qualified : "The examples here given are not necessarily exclusive. According to the context one and the same word may have either a passive or an effective sense".

These remarks can be considered a step forwards towards a solution since rather than resting with a distinction between two kinds of passive as Cremona does, Sutcliffe attempts to reduce both to a unified treatment (his 'effective force') and relegates the difference to a more superficial level : in both cases, a patient is involved, the difference residing in the identity of the agent.



The treatments in Aquilina (1959) and (1965) are different from Sutcliffe's only in omitting any reference to the latter's categories of 'effective force' and 'reciprocity' (cf. Aquilina 1959, p. 266; 1965, pp. 134-135 and pp. 155, ff.)

We now consider Zammit Mangion's (1977) treatment of the problem. She studies the derived forms of the verb together with other syntactic means of expressing the passive, so for our purposes here we will have to extract the relevant points from a mass of other material. On p. 72 she notes that there is no problem of ambiguity, between, in our terms, a passive causative and a reflexive causative interpretation in the case of a verb like 'nhasel' "he was washed" (cf. the earlier exemplification of this verb in connection with our consideration of Cremona's views) because, she says, the verb is "inflexionally marked for reflexive". I will not go into the problem here of trying to decide what is inflectional and what is derivational in Maltese, since in any case, the distinction is not a clear cut one as can be seen from the introductory presentation in ch. 1, § 2. For my purposes however I will continue to call the relationship between a verb like 'hasel' and 'nhasel' a derivational one.

However I have to register my disagreement with Zammit Mangion because I think it is quite possible to have both a passive causative and a reflexive causative interpreta-

tion for 'nhasel', depending on the context. In a later section of her work (p. 85) while discussing this same

17. Ġanni nhasel                      biż-                      żebgha  
John he was washed with the paint

verb again, she says of the sentence in (17), which she glosses as "John was covered with paint" that it "has to be understood as John's having done something involuntarily, as a result of which, he was covered with paint". And of

18. Ġanni hasel                      lilu                      nnifsu                      biż-                      żebgha  
John he washed to him the breath his with the paint

the sentence in (18), glossed as "John covered himself with paint", she notes that John "covers himself with paint deliberately". Now let us examine the sentences in (19).

19. i a. Ġanni ndifen                      fiċ-                      ċimiterju  
John he was buried in the cemetery  
"John was buried in the

tar-                      rahal  
of the village  
village cemetery"

- b. Ġanni ndifen                      fil-                      kotba u                      ma  
he was buried in the books and neg.  
"John buried himself in his books and

kellem. 'il hadd  
 he spoke to no one  
 spoke to no one"

19. ii a. Ġanni nhasel bl- ilma kiesah

he was washed with the water cold

"John washed / took a bath with cold water"

b. It- tarbija nhaslet minn ommha

the baby she was washed from mother her

"The baby was bathed by its mother"

c. It-tarbija nhaslet wahedha

she was washed alone (fem.)

"The baby bathed by itself"

The seventh form verb 'ndifen' in (i) is derivationally related to the first form verb 'difen' "he buried". Without further qualification the sentence in (ia) is taken to refer to John's burial, but note that in (ib) the same verb comes out in a reflexive causative sense, even though there is no explicit encoding of a reflexive pronoun as in (18), and furthermore, one could argue, our world being what it is, people who are in need of 'burial' do not usually provide the service themselves. In other words, it is clear from the sentences in (i) that the semantic structure of the verb 'ndifen' is such that either a passive or a reflexive causative interpretation is possible, depending on the context. Let us now turn to the sentences in (19ii) : 'nhasel' in (iia) has the reflexive causative interpretation

allowed by Zammit Mangion; so too has (iic), but in (iib) the interpretation for 'nhasel' is clearly a passive causative one. If we admit a level of pragmatic analysis we can say that in (19iia) John is presumably an adult and given the socio-cultural context usually obtaining in situations encoded by Maltese, it is assumed that he took a bath by himself, that is, he acted upon himself in washing himself and the other possible passive interpretation with respect to which 'nhasel' is ambiguous is not made use of in interpreting (iia). On the other hand notice that in (iic) a reflexive causative interpretation for a situation in which a baby is involved has to be reinforced by the adjunct 'wahedha' "alone, by itself". Without this adjunct, (iic) would be interpreted as stating that the baby had been given its bath in a situation very similar to that obtaining in (iib).

If the above is granted then we can explain Zammit Mangion's remarks about (17) and (18) as follows : in (18) 'hasel' is a causative (first form) verb and the interpretation of "deliberateness" results from the use of such a verb in conjunction with a reflexive pronoun. The verb in (17) on the other hand, is in principle ambiguous between a reflexive and a passive interpretation. Since people do not usually go about washing themselves with paint, the reflexive (and hence, "voluntary") interpretation is excluded and (17) is understood "as John's having

done something involuntarily, as a result of which, he was covered with paint".

Elsewhere Zammit Mangion does recognise the role of context in disambiguating such sentences. The sentence in (20) (again with a seventh form verb) is ambiguous between

20. Ir- raġel inħaraq  
the man he was burned

a passive causative (the man was burned by someone) and a reflexive causative (the man burned himself) interpretation. However of the sentence in (21), Zammit Mangion

21. Is- sigġijiet inħarqu  
the chairs they were burned

(cf. pp. 82-83) says that "the context makes it clear that the chairs could not have burnt themselves", that is the ambiguity inherent in the verb 'nħaraq' remains, but one of its interpretations is not required in our world (for this particular instance).

In talking about voice, Borg (1978, § 6.0.4) omits any reference to the fifth and sixth forms; and when he talks about the morphology of these forms (pp. 243-245) he says nothing about their meaning. Of the prefix n- or nt- (another variant of the seventh form formative. cf. Sutcliffe 1936, pp. 92-95) he says that these, along with

other devices, convey the passive voice, but in speaking elsewhere of nt- (p. 247) he calls it a "reflexive morpheme" without further qualification.

Summarizing briefly, we are confronted in the fifth, sixth and seventh forms of the verb with a situation in which ambiguity may arise between a reflexive causative and a passive causative interpretation, and within the latter, the possibility of having the agent encoded explicitly as a non-nuclear adjunct, or left implicit.

Coming back now to the sentence in (11) (reproduced here as (22)), note that 'tmexxa' is not ambiguous with

22. Ganni tmexxa            mid-        dar    sa l-  
       John he was walked from the house to the  
       "John was led from home to

iskola (minn Pawlu)  
       school (from Paul)  
       school (by Paul)"

respect to the reflexive or passive causative interpretation:

the former is excluded. But we can still retain our analysis developed in the preceding pages by saying that in principle it is ambiguous but that in our world only the passive causative interpretation is used, since presumably, one cannot lead oneself; neither can the subject of 'tmexxa' (that is, the grammatical subject

which is also the patient) be understood to be acting upon itself in a simple journey of walking, since this is precisely the sense of the reflexive causative first form verb 'mexa'.

If we ask ourselves next what is the relationship of the meaning of this verb to the valency schema (3c)

(3c) PRODUCE (AGENT, (MOVE (ENTITY, SOURCE, GOAL)))

we talked about in relation to 'mexxa' and 'mexa', it will be seen that whereas in the case of the reflexive causative 'mexa' we stressed the identity of the entity in the agent (or superordinate source) role with the entity which moves (or the entity in the traveller role in the subordinate concrete journey), in the case of the passive causative interpretation of 'tmexxa' we have to note that these two roles are fulfilled by different entities, exactly as in the case of the causative 'mexxa'. The only difference between the two is that in the causative 'mexxa', the superordinate agent-role is nuclear, while in the passive causative 'tmexxa' it is non-nuclear, but still encoded as implied. I propose to represent this by a minor modification to the valency schema (3c) as in (3d),

(3d) [PRODUCE (AGENT,] (MOVE (ENTITY, SOURCE, GOAL)))

involving the use of brackets (square brackets to distinguish them from the parenthesis marks in the two predicates of the schema). This takes care of the non-nuclear status of the agent role together with the implication that



ENTITY in the subordinate predicate is in fact encoded as a patient. At the same time the valency schema in its amended form is general enough to account for either of the two interpretations associated with a fifth, sixth or seventh form verb. If the interpretation is a reflexive causative one, then AGENT and ENTITY, though different roles, refer to one and the same entity. On the other hand, if the interpretation is a passive causative one, as in the case of 'tmexxa' AGENT and ENTITY refer to two different entities.

#### 1.4 Verbal derivational morphology and thematic structure

Now that we have had a look at the derivationally related forms of the verb 'mexa', it will be profitable to stop for a moment and take another look at the roles which enter into play in the sentences we have been

22. a. Ġanni mexa (mid-dar) (sa l-iskola)  
       "John walked (from home)(to school)"
- b. Pawlu mexxa 'il Ġanni (mid-dar)(sa l-iskola)  
       "Paul walked John (from home) (to school)"
- c. Ġanni tmexxa (mid-dar) (sa l-iskola)  
       "John was walked (from home)(to school)
- (miġn Pawlu)  
       (by Paul)"

examining. It will be seen from the sentences in (22) that some expressions are consistently optionally present while others are obligatorily present. The underlying roles associated with the obligatorily present expressions we will call, following Halliday (1970) participant roles, since they consistently participate in the nuclear structure of each of the propositions expressed by the sentences in (22). As such they are encoded as essential components of the situation being talked about. However the optional expressions occurring in each of the sentences in (22) refer to circumstantial roles associated with the situation being described.

Now if we take a further look at the sentences in (22) it will be seen that the derivational changes in the verb correspond essentially to changes in the array of participant, rather than circumstantial roles. The expression 'Ganni' for instance, is grammatical subject in (22a) and (22c), but grammatical object in (22b). 'Pawlu' on the other hand is grammatical subject in (22b) but its status as an expression within the sentence is not even nuclear in (22c) : it refers to a role in this latter sentence which is not a participant one.

In so far as the grammatical subject of a sentence is a natural (though by no means exclusive) candidate for thematic subjecthood (for the notion of thematic structure cf. again Halliday 1970 and Lyons 1977, § 12.7)

we can see from the sentences in (22) that the derivational morphology associated with a particular verb is intimately connected with the question of which expression will be chosen as thematic subject. In (22b) the expression 'Pawlu' is both the grammatical and the thematic subject. In addition it is also the logical subject (or agent). In (22c) on the other hand, 'Ġanni', is the grammatical and thematic subject but the logical object (or patient). The logical subject is not even nuclear in this sentence.

Finally let us have another look at the sentences in (14c) and (14d) reproduced here as (23), which we discussed in the previous section in connection with the notion of 'passivity' and 'grammatical subjecthood'. In (23a) 'Ġanni' is the thematic subject and logical object, but 'Pawlu' is both the grammatical and the logical subject.

23. a. Ġanni, Pawlu qatlu  
           John, Paul he killed him  
       b. Ġanni qatluh  
           John they killed him

In (23b) again, 'Ġanni' is the thematic subject and logical object. The grammatical subject in this sentence is expressed merely via the inflection of the verb for the third person plural, and the logical subject is more than anything else implied both by the fact that the sentence encodes a logical object (if a logical object, then a

logical subject) and by the anonymous slot, as it were, waiting to be filled, by an expression corresponding to the third person plural verb inflection.

#### 1.5 Towards a semantic classification of the forms of the verb in Maltese

At one or two points in the progress of our discussion we have touched upon matters relating to the semantic classification of the derived forms of the verb in Maltese. In this section I will propose a partial classification based on research conducted in connection with the present study. I have to stress that the classification is constrained in this way, so that it can only be advanced as tentative (and speculative in places).

It will have been noticed, both from the introductory presentation and from points emerging in the course of our discussion, that first form verbs are not homogeneous semantically. Syntactically too, they fall into three types : verbs with a valency of 1, verbs with a valency of 2 and verbs with a valency of 3. Now it has to be remembered that a first form verb is not necessarily associated with one or more derived forms; and correspondingly, a given verb in a derived form is not necessarily associated with a first form verb. But having said that, I think it is also true to say that in so far as first form verbs are associated with derived forms of the verb,

a monovalent first form verb will be associated with a second and fifth form, or with a third and sixth form, while a bivalent and a trivalent first form verb will be associated with a seventh form verb (though there is at least one notable exception to this statement which will be discussed below).

Let us look first at the class of monovalent first form verbs. The verb 'mexa' "he walked" that we have been examining is one such verb. Now in ch. 3, § 1.2 in characterizing 'mexa' as a reflexive causative, we contrasted it with another first form verb (also monovalent), namely 'miet' "he died". The difference between them, it was hinted, lies in the possibility in the case of 'mexa' of regarding the same entity which plays a traveller role in the subordinate concrete journey, as also playing an agent/source role in the superordinate abstract journey of causation, hence the term 'reflexive'. But the entity fulfilling the traveller role in the journey of dying encoded by 'miet' can hardly be credited with responsibility for bringing about such a journey. The reflexive causative interpretation therefore is excluded.

Not only is the traveller not responsible for the journey, but the meaning encoded by 'miet' makes it very difficult to attribute responsibility to anyone at all, as would have been the case in a causative or a passive causative interpretation (with at least an implied agent

in the latter). This means that in the case of the journey encoded by 'miet', no agent is encoded at all. We will use the term 'inchoative' to refer to journeys, in which an entity moves from a source to a goal (from 'life' to 'death' in the case of 'miet') without however the encoding of any agent (ie. without a superordinate source role).

Just as the reflexive causative 'mexa' is associated with the causative 'mexxa' and the passive causative 'tmexxa' so the inchoative 'miet' is associated with the causative 'mewwet' "*he deadened*" (also a second form verb) and the passive causative 'tmewwet' "*he was deadened*" (also a fifth form verb). Other inchoative first form verbs are 'kiber' "*he grew*" and 'gholob' "*he became lean*". In the case of 'miet' we noted that the source and goal of the journey were 'life' and 'death' respectively. In the case of the two verbs just mentioned the traveller goes from the state of being less big or lean to the state of being bigger or leaner. Associated with 'kiber' is the causative 'kabbar' "*he grew (trans.)*" and the passive causative 'tkabbar' which is usually translated as "*he became proud*" but which we can now interpret as a fifth form verb in which the passive causative interpretation is not made use of and instead the reflexive causative meaning appears:

X acted upon itself in such a way that X grew proud. It is not difficult to associate this interpretation with the meaning for this verb given above "*he became proud*".

The verb 'gholob' "he became lean" is not associated with any derived form (in my speech).

Now in the introductory presentation, ch. 1, § 2.2.8 we saw that the meaning of the ninth form can be interpreted as inchoative : eg. 'čkien' "he grew small", 'hxien' "he grew fat", 'hmar' "he blushed, became red". These ninth form verbs are associated with a causative (second form) and a passive causative (fifth form) verb respectively. Semantically, first form verbs like 'kiber' "he grew" and 'gholob' "he became lean" are indistinguishable from ninth form verbs like 'čkien' "he grew small" and 'hxien' "he grew fat".

The tables in (24) set out in summary form the points we have been making so far. For the equivalence of second

24. Classification involving first form monovalent, and ninth form, verbs

a.

Reflexive Causative	1	1
Causative	2	3
Passive Causative	5	6

b.

Inchoative	1	9
Causative	2	2
Passive Causative	5	5



and third, and fifth and sixth forms respectively (cf. 24a) note the discussion in ch. 3, § 1.3, where the semantic equivalence of fifth, sixth and seventh form verbs was pointed out. A similar equivalence obtains between second and third forms but we will not go into the matter here (cf. Sutcliffe's remark, quoted in ch. 1, § 2.2.2, "the third form... is practically an extension of the second, and has the same meanings").

We turn next to the class of bivalent first form verbs, of which we have already met a few in the course of our discussion in ch. 3, § 1.3. For my purposes here I will characterize them semantically rather loosely as 'causative' eg. 'qatel' "he killed", 'seraq' "he stole", 'qaleb' "he overturned", 'hasel' "he washed (trans.)", 'difen' "he buried". Notice however that the verb 'halaq' "he created" was characterized earlier as factitive. So too is 'ghamel' "he made". All these verbs however share at least two features : the agent is the grammatical subject, and they are all associated with a seventh form in which the agent is non-nuclear.

If we now compare the passivizing morphology in the fifth and sixth forms with that in the seventh form, we will see that in the case of the former, the formative t- is prefixed to a causative form which is itself derived, while in the latter, the formative n- is prefixed to a causative form which is underived. The table in (25)

25. Classification involving first form bivalent,  
and seventh form, verbs

Causative	1
Passive Causative	7

presents the relationship between bivalent first form verbs and seventh form verbs in a way which makes possible a comparison with the relationships between other forms of the verb shown in the tables in (24).

In ch. 3, § 1.1 we also briefly looked at a verb which we characterized as 'stative' (in the sentences in (8iii) and (8iv)). This is the verb 'jixbah' "he resembles" which we said is realised only by an Imperfect form. It too can be characterized as bivalent and it also belongs to the first form. However, it is associated not with a seventh form verb, but with a second and fifth, and in both these forms we have the alternation once again between Perfect and Imperfect : 'xebbah' "he caused to resemble, he likened" (a verb in the second form, but note that it now has a valency of 3) and 'ixxebbah' "he was likened" (a fifth form verb, but with a valency of 2). I do not propose to go further into this matter : I mention it only in view of what I said earlier about the association of bivalent first form verbs with the seventh form.

There are some first form verbs which are trivalent, eg. 'baghat' "he sent" and 'ta' "he gave". These too are associated with the seventh form. But for our purposes we can easily include them in the classification proposed in (25), since it is true also of these verbs that the agent is nuclear in the first form but not in <sup>the</sup>seventh.

It was mentioned earlier that there is a notable exception to the generalisation that monovalent first form verbs are associated with a second and fifth or third and sixth form respectively, while bivalent first form verbs are associated with the seventh form. There are in fact some bivalent first form verbs which are associated with a second, a fifth and a seventh form. This must be the class of verbs Marshall (1968) had in mind, when in noting that there is no verb root which has all the derived forms, he says that four is a good average. The list in (26) sets out some of these verbs, with the meaning for each form. Notice that although the relationship between the meaning of the first form verbs and that of the second form verbs, is one which we have not met with so far, the relationship between the first and the seventh, and that between the second and the fifth is familiar enough : it is the relationship between causative and passive causative respectively.

Note also that two of the verbs which figure in this table are included by Sutcliffe as examples of verbs with

## 26. Verbs with four forms

First form	Second form	Fifth form	Seventh form
ghalaq "he closed"	ghallaq "he hanged"	tghallaq "he was hanged"	nghalaq "he was closed"
lehaq "he caught up with"	lehhaq "he promoted"	tlehhaq "he was promoted"	ntlehaq "he was caught up with"
firex "he laid out"	ferrex "he spread out"	tferrex "he was spread out"	nfirex "he was laid out"
qasam "he broke, he divided"	qassam "he shared out"	tqassam "he was shared out"	nqasam "he became broken, divided"
kiser "he broke"	kisser "he broke in pieces, smashed"	tkisser "he was smashed"	nkiser "he was broken"

intensive force derived from transitive verbs (cf. ch. 1, § 2.2.1). Note in this connection that Aquilina (1959, p. 265) is mistaken in saying that an "intransitive V[erbal] B[ase] 1 becomes... Intensive" (his third subclass of verbs of the second form) as can be seen from his own examples : 'kisser' and 'ferrex' derived respectively from 'kiser' "he broke" and 'firex' "he laid out" both of which are transitive (cf. also Aquilina 1965, p. 153).

It is in connection with verbs like the ones in (26) that I disagree with Sutcliffe in attributing primary status to the meaning of intensification for the second form (cf. again, ch. 1, § 2.2.1 and ch. 3, § 1.1).

In our previous discussion of the second form, we noted that the causativizing morphology operates on first form monovalent reflexive causative or inchoative verbs. But with the verbs in (26) the causativizing morphology operates on first form bivalent verbs which are already causative (in the loose sense adopted earlier).

In discussing verb valency Lyons (1977, § 12.4) notes that "the converse process, whereby the intrinsic valency of a verb is augmented rather than decreased, is found most obviously in those languages in which there is a productive causative construction... this has the effect of increasing the valency of the verb by 1, so that intransitive verbs become transitive, as it were, and

transitive verbs become trivalent". Now in the case of the verbs under consideration the causativizing morphology operating on a transitive verb does not make it trivalent:

'kiser' "he broke" and 'kisser' "he smashed" for instance, are equally bivalent. Instead, the 'double causative' as it were, results, I propose, in the intensification of meaning noted by Sutcliffe.

If the causative meaning of the second form is taken as primary, then the intensive meaning of some verbs can be explained on this basis, but if the intensive meaning is taken as primary, it will be difficult to avoid having to postulate two (related but still distinct) senses for the second form.

As already noted in introducing the verbs in (26), the relationship causative / passive causative can be seen to hold between the first and the seventh, and the second and the fifth forms respectively. I cannot here devote much more time to the matter, but I will merely voice my suspicion that the semantic relationship between the first and second forms of these verbs cannot be placed on the same synchronically productive level as that between forms exhibiting the causative / passive causative contrast. Given the notion of 'intensification' one might plausibly hold, for instance, that the meaning of 'kisser' "he smashed" is predictable from that of 'kiser' "he broke". But is the meaning of 'ghallaq'

"he hanged" predictable from that of 'ghalaq' "he closed"? I do not deny that given the meanings of 'ghalaq' and 'ghallaq', a link could be established between them : 'ghallaq' "he hanged", ie. he killed by hanging, by closing tightly the patient's windpipe, but the question remains, is this link predictable? In any case, whatever the answer to this particular question, we can still bring the verbs in the table in (26) within the scope of our classification in terms of the causative / passive causative contrast, as in the table in (27).

27. Classification of verbs with four forms

Causative	1	2
Passive Causative	7	5

Finally I mention briefly some matters of interest to our classification. A more careful examination would involve work well beyond my present purposes.

There are some first form verbs which appear to be ambiguous between a reflexive causative and a causative interpretation, eg. 'hareg' "he went out, he left" or "he took out", and 'hadem' "he worked (as in he worked assiduously)" or "he worked (transitive, ie. in a factitive sense)". The system established for a verb like 'mexa' can be retained for these verbs if we postulate a homony-



## 28. A system with partial homonymic realization

Reflexive causative	'hareġ', 'hadem' 1	-
Causative	'hareġ', 'hadem' 1	'harreg', 'haddem' 2
Passive causative	'nhareġ', 'nhadem' 7	'tharreg', 'thaddem' 5

mous realization for the reflexive causative and causative meanings. These two verbs are also associated with a seventh form passive causative. Besides they have a second and fifth form too, which can be explained analogously to the verbs in (26) and the system in (27). The table in (28) sets out schematically the points made here. The seventh form verbs 'nhareġ' and 'nhadem' are the passive causative forms for the causative forms (homonymous with the reflexive causative ones). The second form verbs 'harreg' and 'haddem' mean respectively 'he trained' and "he employed". The fifth form 'tharreg' and 'thaddem' are the corresponding passive causatives.

As mentioned earlier, the fourth form is an empty class in Maltese (cf. ch. 1, § 2.2.3). This leaves the eighth and tenth forms. As can be seen from Sutcliffe's remarks about these forms (cf. ch. 1, §§ 2.2.7 and 2.2.9) their meanings would not appear to be homogeneous and I doubt whether they can be regarded as productive in the

same sense in which the second, or the fifth and seventh forms, for instance, are productive. Here I merely give some examples of verbs whose place within the system we have been discussing seems relatively clear. 'stabar' is an eighth form verb with a reflexive causative meaning "he was consoled (in the sense that he consoled himself)". With it are associated the second form causative verb 'sabbar' "he consoled" and the fifth form passive causative 'ssabbar' "he was consoled". The eighth form verb 'xtara' "he bought" on the other hand, has a causative meaning (in the loose sense being employed in this section). With

#### 29. Systems with eighth form verbs

reflexive causative	'stabar' 8	-
causative	'sabbar' 2	'xtara' 8
passive causative	'ssabbar' 5	'nxtara' 7

it is associated the seventh form passive causative verb 'nxtara' "he was bought". The table in (29) sets out these eighth form verbs and their associated forms.

The tenth form verb 'stahba' has the reflexive causative meaning "he hid (himself)", and with it are associated the first form causative verb 'heba' "he hid (trans.)" and the seventh form passive causative 'nheba' "he was

hidden". The tenth form verb 'staghgeb' "he was amazed" also seems to have a reflexive causative, rather than a passive causative meaning. Note however that it is associated only with a causative second form verb 'ghaggeb' "he amazed". The sentences in (30) contain the tenth

30. i Ganni stagheb (b' li ra)  
John he was amazed at, with that he saw  
"John was amazed at what he saw"

ii<sup>x</sup> Ganni staghgeb { a. minn dak li ra  
from that that he saw  
b. minn Pawlu  
from Paul

form verb together with an optional expression. Notice that (30ii), with the agent preposition 'minn' (preceding a second-order nominal in (a) and a first-order nominal in (b)), is unacceptable. These two tenth form verbs, together with the forms of the verb they are associated with, are set out in the table in (31).

### 31. Systems with tenth form verbs

Reflexive causative	'stahba' 10	'staghgeb' 10
Causative	'heba' 1	'ghaggeb' 2
Passive causative	'nheba' 7	-

## CHAPTER FOUR

## 1. A first approach to aspect

It was explained in chapter 1, § 4 that the discussion of aspect to which chapter five is devoted, has to be anticipated somewhat in preparation for some of the points which still have to be made in the later sections of this chapter. In this section we will be concerned only with the opposition between the Perfect and Imperfect forms of the verb : other forms which are possibly relevant for a study of aspect will be dealt with in chapter five (cf. also ch. 1, § 1). The verb in (1a) is traditionally said to be in the Perfect form, while that in (1b) is said to be in the Imperfect form (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.1). Although

1. a. Ġanni mexa mid-dar sa l-iskola  
"John walked from home to school"
- b. Ġanni jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola  
"John walks from home to school"

this terminology is not particularly felicitous (cf. ch. 5, § 1.2), it is difficult to find an ideal pair of terms, so I will be retaining the traditional ones as identificatory labels for the forms under discussion. One point to underline at the outset is that if we consider the morphological criterion of inflection (cf. especially ch. 1, § 2.1.1), then each of these two forms can be regarded as the only two fully verbal forms in the language.

In (1a) we have the encoding of one completed (concrete) journey from home to school accomplished by John. Although the speaker is saying something about John's journey from one place to another, the moment he refers to it using the Perfect form of the verb, he is giving information about the situation he has in mind as a complete whole. Since the journey is presented as completed, it follows that it must have taken place prior to the moment of speaking. This explains the use of the past in my translation of (1a). In (1b) on the other hand, we have a statement about a recurring piece of behaviour on the part of John (cf. Sutcliffe's remarks about habitual action in ch. 1, § 2.1.1). I note in passing that the Imperfect is the form used in Maltese for generic statements as in (2). From (1b) a native speaker of Maltese can infer that John goes from home to school regularly,

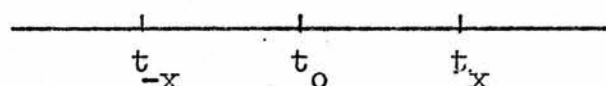
2. Ix- xemx titla'          fil-    Lvant  
      the sun she ascends in the east  
      "The sun rises in the east"

or at least fairly frequently, and that on each occasion of his doing so, he walks, rather than say, takes a bus. Compared to the Perfect, the Imperfect encodes a given situation in a way which at first sight, would seem to be quite amorphous, giving it almost a quality-like nature, although as noted above, both forms display a verbal quality, at least with respect to the morphological criterion. If we take a closer look at (1b) however, it

will be seen that we can interpret the Imperfect as encoding an infinite series of repeated (completed) journeys. It is understood from (1b) that John has gone many times from home to school by walking, and that he will continue to do so in the future. (1b) in other words, is a statement about a particular habit of John, and the only amorphous quality about the meaning of the verb is the nature of the series of repetitions : this series is represented as unbounded or infinite.

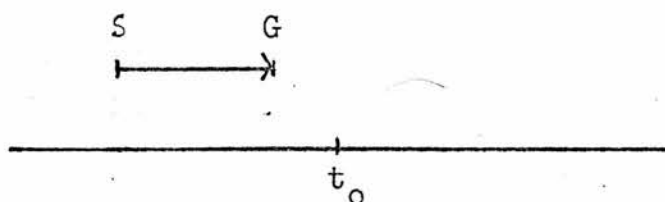
Let us represent the moment of utterance as a point,  $t_0$ , on a horizontal line, as in the figure in (3), so that

### 3. Representation of the moment of utterance



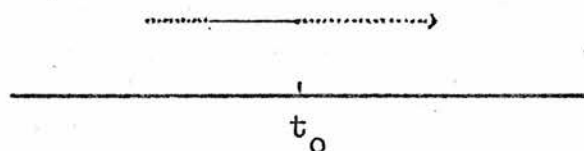
the point  $t_x$  which occurs to the right of  $t_0$  in (3) is interpreted as a point in time subsequent to the moment of utterance,  $t_0$ ; and the point  $t_{-x}$  to the left of  $t_0$  is interpreted as a point in time prior to the moment of utterance. Now in the figure in (4) the arrow joining

### 4. Representation of a situation encoded by a Perfect verb



the two points marked S and G respectively represents the completed journey encoded by the Perfect verb in (1a) from the source ('mid-dar') to the goal ('sa l-iskola'). Since the journey is completed, therefore it must have taken place prior to the moment of utterance, and accordingly in (4) the arrow joining S and G is placed to the left of  $t_0$ . When we come to the situation encoded by the

#### 5. Representation of a situation encoded by an Imperfect verb



Imperfect, the matter of a graphic representation is somewhat more complex. In making use of the sentence in (1b) the speaker has to have information about the particular habit in question; or alternatively he will have had to be in a position to observe John for some time in the past and to feel reasonably justified in believing that the behaviour he has observed in the past, will also continue in the future (cf. in this connection, the sentence in (2) encoding a generic statement). In figure (5) the arrow is made up of two broken portions and one unbroken one in between. The unbroken line represents that part of the series of repetitions of the completed journey open to the speaker's observation : as such it will be noticed



that the unbroken line occurs immediately to the left of  $t_0$ . The broken portions of the arrow represent the unbounded quality of the series of repetitions. The matter is not quite as simple as that however : that portion of the series represented by the broken line to the left of  $t_0$  has already happened prior to the moment of speaking, and as such it cannot be an object of belief for the speaker; in principle at least, he can inspect whether it happened or not. On the other hand, that portion of the series represented by the broken line to the right of  $t_0$  has still to happen. This latter broken line therefore represents not only the unbounded nature of the series, but also the element of modality coming into a statement which makes a claim about something in the future. Unfortunately it is beyond the aim of this present study to examine modality in Maltese, and we will therefore have to leave the matter here, but the question does arise again at a later stage of our discussion.

If we now compare the figures in (4) and (5), it will be seen that the symbols S and G have been omitted in (5). This is because the Imperfect does not encode one completed journey from a given source to a given goal but an unbounded series of repetitions of such journeys. In (4) the arrow represents John's concrete journey from a source to a goal. In (5) the arrow represents the progress of the series of repetitions of such journeys.

Each point in the arrow in (5) represents, as it were, one completed journey. Let us now transpose the spatial source-goal metaphor to the temporal plane. Applying the concept of distance (invoked in ch. 1, § 3) and operating with the notion of time as flowing past the speaker for instance, then : since at any given succession of moments, the distance between a point  $t_{-x}$  and the speaker is increasing, while correspondingly, the distance between a point  $t_x$  and the speaker is decreasing, we can call  $t_{-x}$  the source, and  $t_x$  the goal. From this it follows that we can talk of the speaker and the series of repetitions he refers to, as sharing the same temporal source and goal.

In chapter five we will be having another look at the relation of the Perfect / Imperfect opposition to time reference, but for the moment I want to qualify somewhat my remarks about the nature of this opposition. With additional (temporal) specification, it is possible to obtain an interpretation for a Perfect form verb very close to that of an Imperfect, and vice versa. In (6a) the speaker is saying that John walked from home to school for two years : that is, the Perfect form verb in conjunction with further specification is now encoding a series of repetitions of completed journeys. Notice however that even here the series is not infinite but clearly bounded : for a period of two years. (6b) is unacceptable

6.

Ganni mexa mid-dar  
sa l-iskola

- a. ghal sentejn shah  
for years two whole  
"for two whole years"
- b.x kull jum  
"every day"
- c. kull meta seta'  
each when he could  
"every time he could"
- d.x kull meta jista'  
"every time he can"

in the intended sense of a repetition of the journey happening every day : it can only be interpreted as meaning that the series of repetitions at the rate of one a day happened over a specified period, and the length of that period has to be recoverable either from the context, or by some other means.

It is this same constraint operating in the case of the acceptable (6c) and the unacceptable (6d). In (6c) seta' is the Perfect form of the verb : as such it gives to the adjunct expression it occurs in ("every time he could") a bounded quality. In (6d) this bounded quality is missing because the verb is in the Imperfect form ("every time he can").

In the sentence in (7) on the other hand with the verb in the Imperfect, reference is made to just one

7. Ġanni jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola llum, jekk  
today if

il-karozzi tal-linja  
the cars of the line

ma jahdmux  
neg. they work

"John will walk from home to school today if  
the buses won't be running"

journey. Still the journey is encoded as projected, or postulated; that is, there is still an element of modality and it does not share the quality of a completed journey (prior to the moment of speaking) encoded by the Perfect.

For the moment, I leave the matter here, but we will be examining the Perfect / Imperfect distinction more closely in chapter five. To sum up, therefore, the distinction I originally postulated between the Perfect and Imperfect forms of the verb, is not an absolutely neat one, since as we have just seen, there is some area of overlap. Even in the latter cases however an essential component of the interpretation given for each of the forms respectively still holds, and it seems to me not unreasonable to continue to operate with these interpretations, while keeping in mind the possibility of limited overlap.

## 2. Nominalizations

As we saw in the introductory presentation, a verb usually has associated with it a set of simple or derived nouns (cf. ch. 1, § 2.3). I adopt here the practice introduced in ch. 1, § 4, of speaking of nominalizations, to avoid having to use the terms 'simple noun' or 'derived noun'. The term 'nominalization' will be used here therefore in the sense of the derivation of noun forms from a consonant root via a morphological process. This definition levels the distinction between 'simple' and 'derived' nouns, since simple nouns too, can now be seen as (directly) derived from a consonantal root. This usage also has the advantage of glossing over a classification (largely morphological) which is not directly relevant to my purposes here, since I will be concentrating on the semantic correspondences between nouns and verbs.

Let us now consider the sentences in (8). In (8a)

8. a. Ġanni mexa      ghoxrin mil    illum  
       John he walked twenty    mile today  
       "John walked twenty miles today"
- b. Il- mixja ta' Ġanni l- itwal    wahda      s'issa  
       the walk    of    John the longer one (fem.) to now  
       "John's walk is the longest one so far"
- c. Il- mixjiet ta' Ġanni mhux affarijiet żghar  
       the walks      of    John neg. things      small  
       "John's walks aren't a mere trifle"

8. d. Ġanni jimxi hafna

John he walks a lot

"John walks a lot"

e. Il- mixi li jimxi Ġanni haġa

the walking that he walks John a thing

"John's walking is

ta' l- iskantament

of the amazement

amazing"

we have a Perfect form of the verb, which encodes one completed journey of walking. But in (8b) the noun form mixja also encodes one completed journey of walking. In (8c) mixjiet is a plural form of 'mixja' (cf. Sutcliffe's third subclass within his category 'Derived nouns of the first class', ch. 1, § 2.3.1, and the table in (6) accompanying that section). In (8c) therefore, reference is made to more than one completed journey of walking. The verb in (8d) is in the Imperfect form, giving an interpretation of an infinite or unbounded series of repetitions of a completed journey (cf. ch. 4, § 1). The noun form mixi in (8e) similarly encodes an unbounded series of repetitions of a completed journey. Since mixja in (8b) is associated with the same type of interpretation as the Perfect verb in (8a), and correspondingly mixi in (8e) is associated with the same type of interpretation as the Imperfect verb in (8d), I will call the former, the

Perfect nominalization, and the latter, the Imperfect nominalization (using the term 'nominalization', in the sense explicitated above). The forms mixja and (the plural) mixjiet realize the Perfect nominalization 'mixja', the form mixi (with no plural, cf. again Sutcliffe's remarks in ch. 1, § 2.3.1) realises the Imperfect nominalization 'mixi'.

Let us examine what Sutcliffe says about these forms. A form like mixi (which I am calling the Imperfect nominalization) is characterised as expressing the action denoted by the verb and by the fact that they have no plurals, eg. qtıl "killing" from qatel "to kill" (cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.1). A form like mixja (my Perfect nominalization) is called a noun of unity, which expresses a single performance of the action and has a regular plural eg. qatla "an act of killing, a murder" and its plural qatliet from qatel "to kill" (cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.1). Sutcliffe includes these nouns in his third subclass of derived nouns of the first class : note that these nouns are associated with the first form of the verb (cf. the table in (6), ch. 1, § 2.3.3). But Sutcliffe's category 'derived nouns of the third class' also contains a subclass of (derived) nouns, this time associated with the derived forms of the verb. As far as their meaning is concerned, however, they are characterized in exactly the same way as the derived nouns associated with the first form (cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.3).



The example I use in my table in (6) in that section is taghlim "instruction" (the Imperfect nominalization) and taghlīma "a lesson" (the Perfect nominalization, with the plural taghlimiet "lesson"), all associated with the second form verb 'ghallem' "he taught".

Notice the morphology of these forms. In each case the Perfect nominalization (ie. Sutcliffe's noun of unity) ends in the suffix -a and takes the plural suffix -iet. The Imperfect nominalization, on the other hand, is made up simply of the consonantal root (with the formative t- in the case of the derived nouns : compare the formative t- in the fifth and sixth forms, cf. §§ 2.2.4 and 2.2.5) and a vocalic sequence.

There is even more however. In his section 'Classification of nouns according to content' (cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.4) Sutcliffe establishes six subclasses. We will come back to this classification later in this section, but for the moment it is the first three of Sutcliffe's subclasses which will occupy our attention here. The first subclass, he says, is made up of a collective noun, eg. baçar "cattle", siḡar "trees", kliem "words", or a noun of material, eg. hadīd "iron", xaham "fat". The second subclass is a "nomen unitatis", ie. a noun expressing one of the individuals that make up the content of the collective noun, eg. baqra "a cow", siḡra "a tree", kelma "a word", or a definite quantity of the material expressed

by the collective noun, eg. hadida "a piece of iron", xahma "a piece of fat". The third subclass is a plural noun, which is the plural of the noun of unity and is applicable to a definite number of such individuals, eg. baqriet "cows", sigriet "trees", kelmiet "words", or definite quantities, eg. hadidiet "pieces of iron", xahmiet "pieces of fat".

Notice that these subclasses are related to each other semantically in exactly the same way as the Imperfect nominalization and the Perfect nominalization (with its plural) we talked about above. Furthermore the morphology is also analogous : the suffix -a and the plural in -iet for the Perfect nominalization and the consonantal root and vocalic sequence for the Imperfect nominalization.

Although Sutcliffe comes very close to the kind of distinctions we have been talking about, he does not see any connection between the opposition on the verb Perfect / Imperfect, on the verbal noun eg. mixja - mixjiet, taghlina - taghlimiet as opposed, respectively, to mixi, taghlim, and the opposition on other subclasses of nouns, eg. baqra - baqriet, hadida - hadidiet as opposed, respectively, to baqar, hadid.

We noted earlier that while the Perfect nominalization is realized by a singular and a plural form, the Imperfect nominalization is realized only by one form. In the light of the points made above we can now understand why

the Imperfect nominalization has only one form : for the encoding of an unbounded series of repetitions of (completed) journeys (in the case of the verbal noun) or of, say, certain individuals (in the case of a so-called collective noun) is already plural; or rather, the notion of plurality is included in that of an unbounded or infinite series of repetitions.

The notion of a series as unbounded or infinite is further brought out by the way in which Sutcliffe characterises the form we are calling the plural of the Perfect nominalization. He says it "is applicable to a definite number of... individuals or definite quantities" (cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.4; cf. also my discussion of the expressions in (9) below).

Note also that Sutcliffe uses the English indefinite article in giving the meaning of Perfect nominalizations but not in giving that of Imperfect ones. Maltese has only a definite article, but in the light of the foregoing, the suffix -a which consistently figures in singular Perfect nominalizations (as already mentioned) could almost be regarded as equivalent in function to an indefinite article.

Let us now examine the expressions in (9) : they are intended to demonstrate through the use of different quantifiers, the interpretation advanced for the three types of noun forms under consideration. In (9i), quanti-

9. i a.	i b. x mixjiet	i c. x mixi
mixja		
"a walk"		
taghlima	x taghlimiet	x taghlim
"a lesson"		
baqra	x baqriet	x baqar
"a cow"		
hadida	x hadidiet	x hadid
"a piece of iron"		

ii a.	ii b.	ii c.
mixja	mixjiet	mixi
taghlima	taghlimiet	taghlim
baqra	? baqriet	baqar
hadida	hadidiet	hadid
x hafna		
"a lot"		

iii a.	iii b.	iii c.
mixja	mixjiet	mixi
taghlima	taghlimiet	taghlim
baqra	? baqriet	baqar
hadida	hadidiet	hadid
x ftit		
"a little"		

9. iv a.	<div> <div> mixja taghlima baqra hadida </div> <div> hames "five" </div> </div>	iv b.	<div> <div> mixjiet taghlimiet baqriet hadidiet </div> <div> hames </div> </div>	iv c.	<div> <div> mixi taghlim baqar hadid </div> <div> hames </div> </div>
v a.	<div> <div> mixja taghlima baqra hadida </div> <div> mitt "one hundred" </div> </div>	v b.	<div> <div> mixjiet taghlimiet baqriet hadidiet </div> <div> mitt </div> </div>	v c.	<div> <div> mixi taghlim baqar hadid </div> <div> mitt </div> </div>

fication with 'one' is possible only in the case of the singular Perfect nominalization, as in (ia). Quantification with 'a lot' (or 'many') is acceptable with the Imperfect nominalization as in (iic), but sounds odd with at least one of the plural Perfect nominalizations in (iib). The situation is the same for quantification with 'a little' in (iii). The expressions in (iv) and (v) involve numerical quantification. Sutcliffe notes that the numbers from 2 to 10 are accompanied by the noun in the plural, the numbers above 10 by the noun in the singular and numbers above a hundred but under a hundred and eleven again take the noun in the plural (1936, p. 188; cf. also Borg 1974). Notice now that in (9iv) quantification with 'five' is possible with the plural Perfect nominalization in (ivb) but not with the Imperfect nominalization in (ivc). And quantification with 'one hundred' is again not possible with the Imperfect nominalization in (vc) but only with the singular Perfect nominalization in (va).

It will be seen from (9) that quantification of an Imperfect nominalization is not possible when the quantity involved is precisely determined. On the other hand quantification of a plural Perfect nominalization is not possible when the quantity involved is 1 or a number above 10 (cf. Sutcliffe's remarks above). In fact Sutcliffe calls the plural Perfect nominalization, the 'determinate plural', and as we saw in the introductory presentation

(cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.4), he contrasts it with what he calls the indeterminate plural. The indeterminate plural, he says, is used of things belonging to a certain class taken in general. But then he continues, the use of the collective noun is very similar. Next he attempts to draw a distinction between the collective and the indeterminate plural : "... strictly understood the collective denotes a number of things considered as a class, whereas the indeterminate plural denotes them as the individuals of a class. Collectives used strictly in their collective sense take their verb in the singular. In practice collective nouns are also used, as in English, to denote primarily the members of the class. In this case they are almost assimilated to plurals" (p. 36). Here are some of Sutcliffe's examples:

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Determinate</u> <u>Plural</u>	<u>Indeterminate</u> <u>Plural</u>
<u>gidra</u> "a turnip"	<u>gidriet</u>	<u>gdur</u>
<u>gilda</u> "a skin, a piece of leather"	<u>gildiet</u>	<u>glud</u>
<u>huggiega</u> "a bonfire"	<u>huggiegiet</u>	<u>hgejjeg</u>

Notice once again that the morphology of these forms is exactly parallel to the pattern we have observed so far for different subclasses of Perfect and Imperfect nominalizations (the Perfect nominalization with a singular form in -a and a plural in -iet, and the Imperfect nomina-



lization with a consonantal root and vocalic sequence).

Now Sutcliffe gives only two examples, explicitly, of a noun which has both a collective and an indeterminate plural (cf. p. 30):

<u>Noun of</u> <u>Unity</u>	<u>Determinate</u> <u>Plural</u>	<u>Collective</u>	<u>Indeterminate</u> <u>Plural</u>
<u>hajta</u>	<u>hajtiet</u>	<u>hajt</u>	<u>hjût</u>
"a piece of thread"			
<u>qamha</u>	<u>qamhiet</u>	<u>qamh</u>	<u>qmûh</u>
"a grain of wheat"			

He does not give a meaning for these indeterminate plurals. In my speech 'hjût' would mean something like "lengths of thread" (as opposed to the determinate plural 'hajtiet' "pieces, or bits, of thread") and 'qmûh' would have the meaning "varieties of wheat" (as opposed to the determinate plural 'qamhiet' "grains of wheat"). There is also at least one other noun which Sutcliffe lists as a noun of material in one place (p. 30) 'hadîd' "iron", with its noun of unity 'hadida' "a piece of iron" and the determinate plural 'hadidiet' "pieces of iron", but of which he gives the indeterminate plural in another (p. 37), 'hdejjed' (again without giving the meaning of this form) which in my speech is rather an obscure form of whose meaning I am not sure.

Notice again in these three examples, the analogous morphology : the indeterminate plural forms, like the collective ones, are made up of a consonantal root and a vocalic sequence (with no suffixes). In view of this, as well as the differences in meaning seen above, I find it hard to justify a distinct category 'indeterminate plural'. Besides the trouble Sutcliffe goes to to establish a distinction between the meaning of a collective noun and that of an indeterminate plural one (cf. above), at the end of his list giving examples of nouns with a determinate and indeterminate plural, he says that those nouns which have one plural only use this form in all cases without distinction of meaning. There are many such nouns, eg. 'tifel' "a boy", 'tfal' "boys (or children)", 'ragel' "a man", 'rgiel' "men", 'qalb' "a heart", 'qlub' "hearts"

- |          |                       |         |              |
|----------|-----------------------|---------|--------------|
| 10. i a. | tifel wiehed          | i b.x   | tfal wiehed  |
|          | a boy one (masc.)     |         | boys         |
| ii a.x   | hames tifel           | ii b.   | hamest itfal |
|          | five                  |         |              |
| iii a.   | mitt            tifel | iii b.x | mitt tfal    |
|          | one hundred           |         |              |

and the suppletive pair 'mara' "a woman", 'nisa' "women". All these show the same behaviour (in the relevant sense) as tifel - tfal in the expressions in (10). If these expressions are compared with those in (9) it will be seen that the plural form tfal cannot occur with the quantifier

'one' in (ib), while in (9) both the plural Perfect nominalization (9ib) and the Imperfect nominalization (9ic) are unacceptable in the same environment. Similarly both the plural form tfal in (10iib) as well as the plural Perfect nominalization in (9vb) and the Imperfect nominalization in (9vc) are unacceptable in quantification with 'one hundred'. On the other hand, the plural 'tfal' in (10iib) with a morphophonemic change) and the plural perfect nominalization in (9ivb) but not the Imperfect nominalization in (9ivc), are acceptable in quantification with 'five'.

This distribution tallies with Sutcliffe's remarks about nouns with one plural form. The immediately preceding discussion will have established the fact that there are many nouns in Maltese with only one plural form, but that this does not invalidate the distinction we have established between a plural Perfect nominalization and an Imperfect nominalization. I suggest that rather than setting up the category 'indeterminate plural' the forms hjut and qmuħ be regarded simply as the plural of the corresponding collective, taken in an undifferentiated (or singular) sense. Presumably the form hdejjeđ mentioned above could be similarly interpreted.

On the basis of all the evidence examined, I propose to retain as the principal nominal subcategories, the Perfect and Imperfect nominalizations. The category

plural, as we have seen, does not apply to the Imperfect nominalization, and the Perfect nominalization is realised by two forms, a singular and a plural. The results of the preceding discussion are presented in summary form in the table in (11).

With respect to Sutcliffe's two other classes of nouns, the dual and the diminutive, there is only a small number of forms which fall into either of the two : cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.4. Also as noted in the same section some of the forms Sutcliffe classifies as dual are really plural. I will not be considering these forms for present purposes.

Aquilina (1959, p. 294; 1965, p. 71) takes up Sutcliffe's distinction between determinate and indeterminate plurals, but tacitly abandons it in his later work (ie. 1965, p. 71) since he uses the term 'collective' to head the list under which he gives the supposedly indeterminate plural forms. In speaking of the morphology of (derived) verbal nouns, he notes (1959, p. 164) that "the patterns... with few exceptions vary formally by the addition of suffix a to indicate unity of action, as tifkira 'a (one) remembrance', and suffix... iet to indicate plurality of action as tifkiriet "remembrances" [associated with the verbal noun tifkir "remembrance" and the second form verb fakkar "he reminded"]". He too however does not see any connection between the opposition expressed, in say the verb forms mexa / jimxi and that in the so called verbal nouns mixja / mixi.

## 11. A reclassification of nouns

a. Imperfect nominalization	b. Perfect nominalization	c. plural Perfect nomin.
1a Simple verbal noun <u>mixi</u> "walking"	1b Noun of unity of (1a) <u>mixja</u> "a walk"	1c Plural of (1b) <u>mixjiet</u> "walks"
2a Derived verbal noun <u>taghlīm</u> "instruction"	2b Noun of unity of (2a) <u>taghlīma</u> "a lesson"	2c Plural of (2b) <u>taghlīmiet</u> "lessons"
3a Collective noun <u>baqar</u> "cattle"	3b Noun of unity of (3a) <u>baqra</u> "a cow"	3c Plural of (3b) <u>baqriet</u> "cows"
4a Noun of material <u>xaham</u> "fat"	4b Noun of unity of (4a) <u>xahma</u> "a piece of fat"	4c Plural of (4b) <u>xahmiet</u> "pieces of fat"
5a Plural homonymous with (5c) <u>tfal</u> "boys, children"	5b A Singular noun <u>tifel</u> "a boy"	5c Plural of (5b) <u>tfal</u> "boys"
6a Plural homonymous with (6c) <u>qmuḥ</u> "wheat, types" of wheat"	6b Collective as singular <u>qamḥ</u> "(type of) wheat"	6c Plural of (6b) <u>qmuḥ</u> "types of wheat"

Bonello's position on this matter is not clear, since of the subclassification of nouns, he says simply "Nouns are either Common or Proper. Common Nouns are either Singular or non Singular; non Singular may be either Dual or non Dual; non Dual may be either Determinate or non Determinate" (Bonello 1968, p. II-3).

Krier, on the other hand, accepts the distinction, satisfying herself with giving a few examples (cf. Krier 1975, p. 99; 1976, p. 51).

Schabert (1976, p. 184) notes there is a semantic parallel between the opposition Collective / Noun of Unity / Plural and the opposition Indeterminate plural / Singular / Count plural (Schabert's 'count plural' is presumably equivalent to Sutcliffe's 'determinate plural'). However, although he accurately describes the meaning of the forms Sutcliffe calls the noun of unity of the verbal noun (and what I call a Perfect nominalization, eg. mixja "a walk"), he too does not see any connection between the opposition (in his terms) Noun of Unity / Infinitive ('infinitive' is Schabert's term for a form like mixi "walking", corresponding to Sutcliffe's 'verbal noun', and my 'Imperfect nominalization') and the opposition on the verb Perfect / Imperfect.

Besides the nominalizations mixja, mixjiet and mixi which we discussed earlier, there is also a fourth form

12. a. Mosè mexxa l- poplu fid- dežert

he led the people in the desert

"Moses led the people in the desert"

b. It- tmexxiġa ta' Mosè kienet haġa

the leading of Moses she was a thing

"Moses leadership was

providenzjali

providential

providential"

c. Il-poplu tmexxa fid-dežert għal erbgħin sena

he was led for forty years

"The people were led in the desert for forty  
years"

d. It-tmexxiġa tal-poplu fid-dežert kienet

"The people's being led in the desert

haġa providenzjali

was providential"

tmexxiġa. Let us now examine the sentences in (12).

In (12b) 'tmexxiġa' is the nominalization corresponding to the verb 'mexxa' in (12a). But it is also the nominalization corresponding to the verb 'tmexxa', as can be seen from the sentences in (12c) and (12d). In discussing the verb 'tmexxa' earlier (cf. ch. 3, § 1.3) we concluded that this form of the verb is ambiguous between a passive causative and a reflexive causative



interpretation, but that in the use of the particular lexeme 'tmexxa' only the passive causative interpretation was possible. However the passive causative interpretation does not exclude the notion of agency (in fact it is hinted at by the use of the term 'causative'), so that it should come as no surprise that the corresponding nominalization should allow both a causative and a passive causative interpretation, as in (12b) and (12d) respectively.

Now tmexxiija is the only nominal form which occurs besides mixja, mixjiet and mixi. I suggest that this form in fact realizes homonymously the Perfect / Imperfect opposition we encountered in discussing the former set of forms (cf. the sentences in (8)). Besides this same opposition (but through different forms) obtains in the case of other (derived) verbs, as shown in the table in (13).

13. A homonymously-realised nominal aspectual opposition

Second form verb	Perfect nominalization	Imperfect nominalization
<u>ghallem</u> "he taught"	<u>taghlima</u> "a lesson"	<u>taghlim</u> "instruction"
<u>fakkar</u> "he reminded"	<u>tifkira</u> "a memento"	<u>tifkir</u> "remembrance"
<u>mexxa</u> "he led, walked (trans.)"	<u>tmexxiija</u> "(an act of) leadership"	<u>tmexxiija</u> "leadership, guidance"

Furthermore we noted earlier that in the case of certain nouns, the plural Perfect nominalization and the Imperfect nominalization are realized by the same form (cf. example (5) in the table in (11)). In the case of tmexxiġa all three categories would be realised homonymously. Given the phonological structure of the consonantal root of this lexeme, such a homonymous realization is easily explained in morphophonemic terms.

14. a. Mosé ġmexxi l- poplu b' kuragġ kbir  
 Moses he leads the people with courage big(masc.)  
 "Moses leads the people courageously"
- b. It- tmexxiġa tal- poplu f' idejn  
 the leading of the people in hands (of)  
 "The guidance of the people is in the hands of
- raġel kuragġuż  
 a man brave  
 a brave man"
- c. Il- poplu ġitmexxa biss minn raġel kuragġuż  
 the people he is led only from a man brave  
 "The people can only be led by a brave man"

Finally such a conclusion is supported by the sentences in (14) in which tmexxiġa in (14b) is the nominalization corresponding both to the Imperfect of the causative verb in (14a) and the Imperfect of the passive causative in (14c). But as we saw in the sentences in (12) tmexxiġa

is also the nominalization corresponding to the Perfect form of the same verbs.

Although we have just seen that 'tmexxija' is a nominalization corresponding to both the causative 'mexxa' and the passive causative 'tmexxa', it is worth pointing out that the nominalizations 'mixi' and 'mixja' correspond only to the reflexive causative 'mexa'.

15. a. Il-poplu mexa fid-dežert  
"The people walked in the desert"
- b. Il-mixi tal-poplu fid-dežert  
"The people's walking in the desert"
- c. Mosè mexxa l-poplu fid-dežert  
"Moses led the people in the desert"
- d. Il-mixi ta' Mosè fid-dežert  
"Moses' walking in the desert"
- e. Il-poplu tmexxa fid-dežert  
"The people was led in the desert"

Thus in (15a) and (15b) we have the expected correspondence between 'mexa' and 'mixi' in terms of a reflexive causative interpretation. In the case of (15c) and (15d) notice however that the nominalization 'mixi' can be interpreted only with reference to Moses' walking, not to his leading the people. And with reference to the sentence in (15e), a nominalization with 'mixi' such as the one in (15b) can only be interpreted in the reflexive causative

sense of the people's walking, not in the passive causative one of their being led.

Unfortunately it would take us too far afield to examine the problem of which verbal nouns (whether derived or not) are semantically associated with which form of the verb (but cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.3 and Sutcliffe 1936, pp. 146-153 for a classification based primarily on morphological considerations).

### 3. Nouns and Verbs

Up to this point in our discussion we have assumed a classification of linguistic expressions into parts-of-speech. Although the formulation of a theory of the parts-of-speech in Maltese is not within the scope of the present study, yet we will need at least an elementary idea of the possible status of certain expressions which are directly relevant to our study of aspect. In this section we will touch briefly on the distinction between nouns and verbs in Maltese. In doing so, I draw upon Lyons' discussion (1977, §§ 11.1, 11.2 and 12.7), picking up only the immediately relevant thread of the argument, and going on as quickly as possible to a consideration of my data.

The syntactic definitions of the parts-of-speech rest ultimately upon the possibility of grouping simple

and complex expressions into expression classes in terms of the distribution of the forms of each expression. If we accept the proposal that there is an intrinsic connection between the syntactic function of being the subject of the sentence and the syntactic category NP, and that there is similarly an intrinsic connection between the function of being the predicate of the sentence and the category VP, then the question which arises is whether we can arrive at a purely syntactic definition of 'subject' and 'predicate' that can be applied across languages to determine the assignment of NP and VP. We have to note, of course, that it is not nouns, but nominals that function as subjects (or objects) and that it is not verbs, but verbals that function as predicates. It is generally accepted that the distinction between nouns and verbs at least is universal and that this distinction, furthermore, is intrinsically bound up with the difference between reference and predication.

Lyons advances the following general grammatical definition of nouns : "a noun is a lexeme which may occur as the sole or the principal open-class constituent in a nominal and is syntactically or morphosyntactically distinguishable from other lexemes that function as open class constituents (ie. verbs or adjectives) in the same positions of occurrence" (p. 430).

Coming back to the distinction between subject and predicate, this distinction, as it is usually explained, rests upon the assumption that the nucleus of a simple sentence is composed of two immediate constituents, one of which is a nominal (NP) and the other a verbal (VP). But how do we know which of the two nuclear expressions is the subject and which is the predicate? To be able to answer this question we have to make some assumptions about the distribution or internal syntactic structure of nominals and verbals, such as for instance, the assumption that there can be more than one NP, but only one VP, in the nucleus of a simple sentence; and more specifically that an NP can occur as part of a VP. The expression class we are calling a verbal can be subdivided in terms of the internal structure of its members into several subclasses. Two of these are traditionally distinguished as intransitive and transitive respectively; and they differ in that, whereas the members of one subclass are composed of intransitive verbs, members of the other subclass are composed of transitive verbs combined with an object NP. What this means in effect is that an expression of the class we are calling a nominal can not only combine with an expression which fulfils the function of a predicate to form the nucleus of a sentence (ie. with an intransitive verb); but can also combine with an expression from a subclass of the verbal class (ie. with a transitive verb) to form a predicate expression; and this is the syntactic basis of the distinction between the subject of a verb and its object.

However we still have to identify which is the subject and which the predicate. According to the earliest formulation of the distinction between subject and predicate in the Western grammatical tradition, the subject is the expression that is employed by a speaker to identify what he is talking about and the predicate is the expression that is used to say what he wishes to say about it. This opposition is sometimes referred to by means of the distinction between topic and comment, so that we can say that the subject is the expression which refers to and identifies the topic and the predicate is the expression which expresses the comment.

This assignment tallies with yet another traditional criterion for the distinction of subject and predicate : the logical criterion, that in any proposition in which a particular term is combined with a general term, the particular term is the subject and the general term is the predicate; and this is based, ultimately, upon the ontological distinction between individuals and properties.

Now there are comparatively few propositions expressible by means of the sentences of natural languages that are naturally thought of as being composed of a single entity-referring expression and a single property-denoting expression (cf. Lyons 1977, § 12.4). Natural language systems seem to be designed, as it were, to describe dynamic, rather than static, situations - situations in



which, typically, there is an agent who is presented as the source of the activity.

The application of the term 'logical subject' is extended in such a way that in sentences that express propositions describing such dynamic situations the expression referring to the agent is commonly called the logical subject.

The logical subject and predicate may or may not be the same as the expressions that would be identified as subject and predicate by virtue of the topic-comment criterion, even when the topic-comment criterion is independently applicable. It may be assumed, however, that in general the two criteria tend to coincide.

The identification of an expression as a noun then, hinges essentially on its occurrence in a nominal (cf. Lyons' definition quoted above). The reason why we say that in the vast majority of the world's languages there is a grammatical difference, not only between nominals and verbals, but also between nouns and verbs, is that in such languages there are distributional differences between the two classes of lexemes in question with respect to their occurrence in nominals and verbals respectively.

Before proceeding with a discussion of the data, let me follow Lyons a little further, in order to tie in the immediately preceding discussion with what was

said earlier (in ch. 2, § 2.6) about verb valency. That all non-elliptical simple declarative sentences can be divided exhaustively into a nominal subject and a verbal predicate is a view that is strongly represented in traditional grammar. There is however an alternative analysis of the structure of propositions that is formalized in the first-order predicate calculus. According to this view, the predicate is an operator with one or more arguments : an intransitive verb is formalized as a one-place operator which takes an NP as its sole argument; a transitive verb is a two-place operator which relates one NP to another, and so on. According to this conception of the syntactic structure of sentences the predicator (Lyons' term for the sense of 'predicate' introduced above) is an element which combines with a single NP or relates an NP to something which may or may not be an NP : it is the pivot, as it were, of the sentence-nucleus.

Although it can scarcely be said that anyone has yet initiated the attempt at a formulation of the theory of the parts-of-speech in Maltese (most of the treatments of the language we have been considering make use of terms like 'noun' or 'verb' without attempting to justify their usage), it is to Krier's credit that she seems aware of the problem. She says in her study "Analyse syntaxique de la phrase nominale en maltais" (1975) : "Nous appelons

phrase nominale tout énoncé dont le prédicat est un "non-verbe", qu'il comporte un élément nominal ou non. Le prédicat est l'élément nécessaire à la constitution d'un énoncé, le noyau autour duquel se construit l'énoncé dans son ensemble. La différence entre prédicat verbal et prédicat nominal résulte des caractéristiques syntaxiques propres à chacune des deux classes. Le monème verbal, en maltais, se distingue du "non-verbe" du fait qu'il se combine avec les modalités "aspect" et "mode" et qu'il est unifonctionnel, n'assumant que la fonction prédicative" (pp. 94-95). And at a later stage she says : "De la définition du prédicat donnée ci-dessus ... il découle que le monème prédicatif ne pourrait disparaître de l'énoncé sans détruire celui-ci en tant que tel... Le prédicat est donc identifiable "du fait que la suppression de tous les termes autres que lui fait aboutir à des énoncés possible qui sont des énoncés minimaux" [cf. Claude Hagège, La langue nbum de Nganha, fasc. 2, p. 292]. Ce raisonnement nous permettra de déterminer les monèmes assumant la fonction prédicative dans un énoncé" (p. 100).

Simply identifying a given expression as a predicate however, doesn't get us very far, since, in a given context of utterance, virtually any expression of the language can occur as a predicate (cf. ch. 1, § 5.4 for predicative structures). Besides, it is not correct to say that the

"monème verbal" is distinguished from the "non-verbe" because the former, but not the latter, is combined with the modality "aspect". Taking "aspect" to cover the distinction between the meaning of the Perfect and of the Imperfect forms of the verb, and assuming that the category 'noun' is a subclass of Krier's "non-verbe", then, as we saw in the preceding section (ch. 4, § 2), both nouns and verbs share this distinction.

Borg (1978, p. 208) says of the verb : "The verbal system displays overt morphological marking for 'Aspect', 'Mood', 'Person', 'Gender' and 'Number'; it is also syntactically marked for the features of 'Tense' and 'Voice'". As we have just seen, verbs cannot be distinguished from nouns on the basis of an aspectual opposition. Also, it is not only verbs but nouns too which have overt morphological marking for 'Number' (however cf. below for an important distinction between number marking on verbs and on nouns). As regards the "syntactically marked" features of 'Tense' and 'Voice', Borg would presumably include not only the fifth, sixth and seventh forms of the verb, but also the syntactic constructions expressing passivity which were mentioned in the introductory presentation (cf. ch. 1, § 2.7; cf. also ch. 3, § 1.3), besides syntactic constructions in which a form of the verb 'kien' "he was" precedes the Perfect or Imperfect verb to express certain distinctions, among them those of tense (ch. 5, § 5).

Borg also proposes another criterion (1978, p. 260): "For the purpose of this chapter, a nominal is any word that can take the definite article; including a variety of morphological subgroups such as substantives, adjectives, gerunds and participles, though some of these are otherwise distinguishable from each other by such structural criteria as methods of pluralization and syntactic behaviour". This criterion, however, is too general for our purposes, since as Borg himself notes, it does not serve to distinguish a noun say, from an adjective (cf. ch. 1, § 5.3). Still it can be used to distinguish finite forms of the verb (ie. a Perfect or Imperfect verb), which cannot occur with the definite article.

For my purposes in the present study, I propose to base the distinction between nouns and verbs in Maltese principally on Lyons' diagnostic criterion we saw earlier, supplemented by morphological and morphosyntactic considerations. Unfortunately, all I can do here is assume that it is possible to establish for a subclass of nouns and a subclass of verbs, a syntactic distinction based on the occurrence of certain lexemes in nominals functioning as subject of intransitive or transitive verbs, or as object of transitive verbs; and that on the basis of morphological and morphosyntactic criteria it will be possible to relate other subclasses of nouns and verbs to the subclasses established on this syntactic principle (cf. Lyons 1977, p. 427 : "... in the analysis of particular languages, to

the degree that they support the more widely applicable criteria that define the parts-of-speech in the general theory [morphological and morphosyntactic considerations] may be not only relevant, but in some instances decisive").

I now briefly mention some of these secondary criteria, some of which oppose both nouns and verbs to other expressions in the language, while others serve to reinforce the distinction between nouns and verbs themselves.

First of all, we have seen already that occurrence in predicative position of an expression does not serve on its own to differentiate between nouns and verbs, or indeed between both and other expressions in the language.

However if we take the encoding, by a given expression, of a specific array of participant roles via morphological derivation, then this criterion opposes both nouns and verbs to all/<sup>other</sup>expressions in the language, except for the subclass of adjectivalizations we shall be examining in the next section (cf. ch. 4, § 4): Just as we have characterized the verb 'mexa' as a reflexive causative for instance, and 'mexxa' and 'tmexxa' as causative and passive causative respectively, so the nominalization 'mixja' and 'mixi' correspond to the reflexive causative verb and 'tmexxija' to both the causative and the passive causative (cf. ch. 4, § 2).



Next if we take the Perfect / Imperfect aspectual opposition, this serves to oppose both nouns and verbs to all other expressions in the language including the subclass of adjectivalizations (again, cf. ch. 4, § 4).

Let us come now to the distinction between nouns and verbs. Verbs have tense and modal implications which are lacking in the case of nouns (we shall be mentioning these implications briefly in ch. 5, §§ 3.3, 3.4). At this stage we can bring in Borg's criterion of occurrence with the definite article : only nouns can occur in a position preceded by the definite article.

In itself the criterion of inflection for number does not serve to distinguish between nouns and verbs, since adjectives inflect similarly. Besides, no (semantic) distinction is made, in treatments of Maltese, between the inflection for number of verbs, and that of nouns. However in the light of our analysis in previous sections of this study, we can now see that there are grounds for differentiating between them in this respect. When we say that a verb in the Perfect or Imperfect form inflects for number, we mean number with respect to the cardinality of the person. Thus in (16ia) one person undertakes the (completed) journey from home to school, while in (16ib), the journey is undertaken by two persons. Similarly in (16ii), the series of repetitions of (completed) journeys from home to school, is attributed to one person in (ia)



16. i a. Ġanni mexa mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John walked from home to school"
- b. Ġanni u Marija mxew mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John and Mary walked from home to school"
- ii a. Ġanni jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John walks from home to school"
- b. Ġanni u Marija jimxu mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John and Mary walk from home to school"

and to two persons in (iib).

However when we say that a noun (more precisely, a Perfect noun) inflects for number, we mean number with

17. i a. Il- mixja ta' Ġanni mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 the walk of John  
 "John's walk from home to school"
- b. Il-mixjiet ta' Ġanni mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John's walks from home to school"
- ii a. Il-mixja ta' Ġanni u Marija mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John and Mary's walk from home to school"
- b. Il-mixjiet ta' Ġanni u Marija mid-dar  
 "John and Mary's walks from home  
 sa l-iskola  
 to school"

respect to the cardinality of the journey encoded by the noun lexeme. Thus in (17ia) one (completed) journey of

walking is undertaken by one person, but in (17iia) it is undertaken by two. On the other hand in (17i) one journey is attributed to John in (ia) and several in (ib).

The further inflection of verbs (but not of nouns) for person (and in the third person singular, for gender) can now be seen to follow naturally from this semantic distinction.

#### 4. Adejctivalizations

In talking about the structure of the present work in chapter one (cf. § 4) I anticipated somewhat the findings in this section. It is now time to provide some justification for what was said earlier about the forms Sutcliffe calls the present participle (cf. ch. 1, § 2.5.1) and the past participle (cf. ch. 1, § 2.5.2) as well as the form with the morphological type which he considers both in his treatment of nouns (cf. Sutcliffe's "Derived nouns of the second class", ch. 1, § 2.3.2) and of adjectives (cf. ch. 1, § 2.4). I will refer to these three forms as 'adjectivalizations'. The association with 'adjective' will be explained in the course of this section. The term 'adjectivalization' itself is used (as explained in ch. 1, § 4) in a sense analogous to my use of 'nominalization' (cf. ch. 2, § 5) to refer to the derivation of an adjective form from a consonantal

root via a morphological process. To distinguish between the three adjectivalizations I will make use of the terminology we evolved in chapter three in talking about the forms of the verb. The form miexi (Sutcliffe's present participle) will be termed the reflexive causative adjectivalization, the form mmexxi (Sutcliffe's past participle) the passive causative adjectivalization, and the form mexxej (Sutcliffe's derived noun of the second class) will be termed the causative adjectivalization (cf. the presentation in ch. 1, § 4 as well as the table in (9) in that section).

18. Ġanni miexi mid-dar sa l-iskola

he walking

"John is walking from home to school"

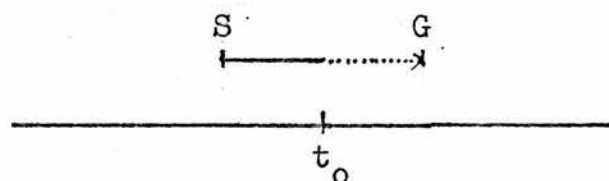
Consider now the sentence in (18) in which we have an occurrence of the reflexive causative adjectivalization. Unlike sentences with the Perfect form of the verb, here we do not have the encoding of one completed journey, since as can be seen from my translation of (18) what is involved is a journey in progress, being reported on by the speaker : that is to say, the journey in (18) is not completed, but it is on the way to completion. In support of this distinction note that whereas the sentence in (19ia) with the Perfect verb form implies both (19ib) and (19ic), the sentence in (19iia) with the reflexive

causative adjectivalization implies (19iib) but not (19iic).

19. i a. Ġanni mexa mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John walked from home to school"
- > b. Ġanni telaq mid-dar  
 "John left home"
- > c. Ġanni wasal l-iskola  
 "John arrived at school"
- ii a. Ġanni miexi mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John is walking from home to school"
- > b. Ġanni telaq mid-dar  
 "John left home"
- ≠ c. Ġanni wasal l-iskola  
 "John arrived at school"

The distinction between a situation encoded by a Perfect verb and that encoded by a reflexive causative

20. Representation of a situation encoded by the reflexive causative adjectivalization



adjectivalization can be represented graphically in terms of the contrast between the figure in (4) (cf. ch. 4, § 1) representing the situation encoded by the Perfect and the

figure in (20). The source of the journey encoded by miexi, just like that encoded by the Perfect, is placed to the left of  $t_0$ , that is, at a point in time  $t_{-x}$ . However unlike the situation for the Perfect, the goal of the journey in (20) is placed to the right of  $t_0$ , that is at a point  $t_x$ , since the journey is not yet completed at the moment the speaker is referring to it. Since G occurs at  $t_x$ , it follows that that portion of the journey from  $t_0$  to  $t_x$  has yet to happen, and the broken line in the figure represents the element of modality coming into a statement which makes a claim about something in the future.

Let us at this point contrast the reflexive causative adjectivalization to both the Perfect and the Imperfect on the basis of the figure in (20) for the former, and the figures in (4) and (5) (cf. ch. 4, § 1) for the latter two respectively. On the one hand, the reflexive causative adjectivalization, like the Perfect, encodes only one journey, but unlike the Perfect, this journey is still in progress, so that the end of the journey has not yet been reached when the speaker is talking about it (this partly explains the use of 'present' in Sutcliffe's term 'present participle'). Miexi, on the other hand, differs also from the Imperfect in that one journey, and not a series of repetitions of a journey, is involved. The two are not completely unlike however, since in both, the goal

(of the concrete journey in the case of miexi, and of the series of repetitions in the case of the Imperfect, cf. ch. 4, § 1), occurs after the moment of speaking. Still, not altogether surprisingly, the element of modality present in the Imperfect is practically not felt at all in the case of miexi, since what is referred to is a journey actually in progress, rather than (the progress of) a series of repetitions of such journeys.

Let us now go on to a consideration of the three adjectivalizations together. Note first their inflection, as set out in the table in (21). The feminine

21. The inflection of adjectivalizations

		Reflexive causative	Causative	Passive causative
Singular	Masculine	<u>miexi</u>	<u>mexxej</u>	<u>mmexxi</u>
	Feminine	<u>miexja</u>	<u>mexxejja</u>	<u>mmexxiija</u>
Plural	Common	? <u>miexja</u> or <u>mixjin</u>	<u>mexxejja</u>	<u>mmexxiija</u> or ? <u>mmexxiijin</u>

singular of the causative adjectivalization is homonymous with the common plural (cf. Sutcliffe's remarks in ch. 1, § 2.4 about the feminine singular form also regarded as

a plural form), but in the case of other lexemes a three term inflection is possible, eg. giddieb "liar" (masc.)", giddieba "liar (fem.)" and giddibin "liars"; hellies "liberator (masc.)", helliesa "liberator (fem.)" and hellisin "liberators". However the plural form of these adjectivalizations with the suffix -in sounds highly odd, the form homonymous with the feminine one being much more acceptable.

The same is true of the inflection of the passive causative adjectivalization : the form homonymous with the feminine being preferred for the plural. Notice however that in the case of the reflexive causative adjectivalization it is the other way round : it is the three term system which is preferred. In the light of Sutcliffe's remarks referred to above and of the morphological pattern in the table in (21) we can conclude that the reflexive causative adjectivalization stands apart from the causative and the passive causative adjectivalizations and that the latter follow more closely the inflection of adjectives. The three term pattern for the reflexive causative adjectivalization exactly parallels the inflection of the verb in the third person (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.1, Table (1)).

Next we pass on to a consideration of some of the syntactic behaviour of these forms, adopting the view that the adjective is typically the modifier of a noun (cf. Lyons 1977, § 11.3 and his definition, p. 448 : "Adjectives are lexemes or other expressions whose most



characteristic feature is that they can occur more freely than any other open-class expressions as modifiers of nouns within nominals").

The subject nominal in the sentence in (22a)

22. a. Ir- raġel il- fqir dejjem ibati  
           the man   the poor always he suffers  
           "The poor man always suffers"
- b. Ir-raġel fqir dejjem ibati
- c. Il-fqir dejjem ibati
- d. Ir- raġel fqir  
           the man   poor  
           "The man is poor"
- e. Ir-raġel il-fqir

exemplifies the preceding definition of an adjective :  
 the expression il-fqir modifies the nominal ir-raġel.  
 (22a) is also an example of the case mentioned by Sutcliffe  
 (cf. ch. 1, § 5.3 and the sentences in (12a) and (12b) in  
 that section) in which an attributive adjective in agree-  
 ment with a noun accompanied by the definite article,  
 itself takes the definite article. However (22b) is also  
 an acceptable sentence, and here again we have an attrib-  
 utive adjective, but this time without the definite  
 article. Note however that an adjective following the  
 definite noun (and with the appropriate intonation pattern)  
 is the construction for an ascriptive predication as in

(22d) (cf. ch. 1, § 5.4 for predicative structures).

Consider now (22c). This sentence poses something of a problem, since unless it is to be understood as being an elliptical variant of (22a), fqir now seems to be a plausible candidate for nominal status, according to the definition of a noun we considered earlier ("... a lexeme which may occur as the sole or the principal open-class constituent in a nominal...", ch. 4, § 3). Notice however the unacceptability of the sentences in (23a) and (23b),

23. a.x Il- fqir l- injorant dejjem ibati  
the poor the ignorant

b.x Il-fqir injorant dejjem ibati

in which the expression il-fqir occupies a position analogous to that of ir-ragel in (22a) and (22b) respectively. Now in the definition of a noun quoted earlier, occurrence in a nominal is not the only condition ("... and is syntactically or morphosyntactically distinguishable from other lexemes that function as open-class constituents... in the same positions of occurrence", ch. 5, § 3). From a comparison of (22a) and (22b) on the one hand and (23a) and (23b) on the other, it will be seen that there is a syntactic difference between ir-ragel and il-fqir : a form like fqir can occur in an expression modifying another expression, but it cannot occur in an expression modified by another expression. In addition there is a morphosyntactic difference : a form like ragel inflects for

number, but a form like fqir besides inflecting for number, also inflects, in the singular, for gender (masculine and feminine : this latter point will be taken up again below).

Although there is considerable overlap therefore, between a noun like 'ragel' and an adjective like 'fqir', a categorial distinction between them is not groundless. So for present purposes I take (22c) to be an elliptical variant of (22a).

Notice finally that the sentence in (22e), with the appropriate intonation, is an equative predication : when used by an adult female speaker the expression 'ir-ragel', literally "the man" is usually taken to mean "my husband", so that (22e) can be glossed as "My husband is the poor one".

In the light of the preceding discussion, consider now the sentences in (24). Instead of the adjective 'fqir', these sentences contain the adjectivalizations we introduced earlier, the (i) sentences in (24) corresponding to (22a), the (ii) sentences corresponding to (22b) and those in (iii) to (22c) respectively. The expressions in (a), (b) and (c) are intended to fit into the frame "X can trip".

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 24. a. i * Ir-raḡel il-miexi<br>ii * Ir-raḡel miexi<br>iii ? Il-miexi<br>b. i * Ir-raḡel il-mexxej<br>ii ? Ir-raḡel mexxej<br>iii Il-mexxej<br>c. i Ir-raḡel l-immexxi<br>ii Ir-raḡel immexxi<br>iii L-immexxi | } | jista' jitfixkel<br>he can he gets confused,<br>he trips<br>"can trip, can get confused" |
|--|---|--|

Notice first of all that only with the passive causative adjectivalization is the complete set of sentences acceptable (that is, the sentences in (24c)). In the case of the causative adjectivalization (24biii) is acceptable, (bii) is questionable and (bi) is unacceptable. Had the status of 'mexxej' as an adjective been unproblematical, we would have expected all the sentences in (24b) to be acceptable. The acceptability of only (24biii) would seem to point to a nominal, rather than to an adjectival status, for 'mexxej', since only the occurrence of the form as the sole open-class constituent in the nominal in (24b) is acceptable. We have seen in fact that Sutcliffe includes a form like mexxej with his second class of derived nouns (cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.2), although he includes other forms with a morphological structure analogous to that of mexxej in his class of adjectives (cf. ch. 1, § 2.4).

In my speech however mexxej can occur attributively with one or two nouns, as for instance in the sentences in (25).

- |              |   |   |           |   |                    |
|--------------|---|---|-----------|---|--------------------|
| 25. Il- vers | } | { | il-mexxej | } | jinstema' ahjar    |
| the verse    |   |   |           |   |                    |
| Id- diskors  |   |   |           |   |                    |
| the speech   |   |   |           |   |                    |
|              |   |   |           |   | he is heard better |

"A smooth flowing verse	}	sounds better"
"A fluent speech		

So what of the behaviour of other forms with a morphological structure equivalent to that of mexxej, of which some are included by Sutcliffe in his second class of derived nouns, and some are classed as adjectives?

Of the forms in the first group (those classed as nouns, cf. ch. 1, § 2.3.2) some can occur with greater

26. a. It- tifel il- giddieb jinqabad malajr  
the boy the liar he is caught quickly  
"A lying boy is quickly found out"

- b.? Ir- raġel il- kittieb ighix hajja diffiċli  
the man the writer he lives a life difficult  
"A writer leads a difficult life"

ease in attributive position with certain nouns, others occur only with greater difficulty. In (26a) giddieb (associated with the verb 'gideb' "he lied") modifies it-tifel and the sentence is quite acceptable. In (26b) on the other hand, with kittieb (associated with the verb 'kiteb' "he wrote") in the same position, the sentence sounds highly odd. However all these forms are quite acceptable in a position analogous to that of mexxej in (24biii), that is, as the sole open-class constituent in the nominal.

Of the forms in the second group (those classed with adjectives cf. ch. 1, § 2.4), all of them can occur in attributive position (like the forms in (26)), but in this position most of them have<sup>the</sup> suffix -i (associated with adjectives, cf. ch. 1, § 2.4; cf. also Sutcliffe, pp. 57-58), as in the sentence in (27a), with the form

27. a. Ir- raġel il- ferriehi jferrah 'il kulhadd  
           the man   the merry   he gladdens to everyone  
           "A merry man gladdens everyone"

b.x Il-ferrieh(i) jferrah 'il kulhadd

ferrieh / ferriehi (associated with the verb 'ferah' "he rejoiced", and in (27) with the causative 'ferrah' "he gladdened"). Unlike the forms classed as nouns, the forms from this second group however, occur with difficulty as the sole open-class constituent in a nominal : cf. (27b).

For some remarks about the semantics of this form, cf. below in this section.

In general we can say therefore that forms analogous to the causative adjectivalization mexxej have a distribution co-extensive in part with that of a typical noun and with that of a typical adjective (but coming closer towards the latter).

In the case of the reflexive causative adjectivalization miexi, all the sentences in (24a) are unacceptable except (aiii) which is questionable.

From the preceding discussion relating to the distribution of the adjectivalizations in (24) it would seem therefore, that mmexxi is closest to a typical adjective, followed by mexxej, which however bears some resemblance to a typical noun; miexi stands apart from the two.

Now notice the ascriptive predications in (28), corresponding in structure to the ascriptive predication

- 28. a. Ir-ragel miexi
- b. Ir-ragel mexxej
- c. Ir-ragel immexxi

in (22d). All three are acceptable, and as such (28) offers us no grounds for differentiating between them. However when we turn to the equative structure exempli-



29. a. ? Ir-raḡel il-miexi  
 b. Ir-raḡel il-mexxej  
 c. Ir-raḡel l-immexxi

fied in (22e), making use of the same three adjectivalizations, as in (29a) - (29c), the sentence in (29a) is questionable. Both (29b) and (29c) however are completely acceptable, and the subject and complement in each case are freely permutable (for this characteristic of equative structures, cf. Lyons 1977, p. 471). (29b) can be glossed as "The man (My husband) is the leader" and (29c) as "The man (My husband) is the one (who is) led".

Now observe the sentences in (30) : (30a) is an acceptable equative predication with the adjectivalization miexi.

30. a. Ir-raḡel li miexi  
 b. x Ir-raḡel li mexxej  
 c. ? Ir-raḡel li mmexxi

Notice however that instead of the definite article before miexi we now have the form li which here fulfills the function of a relative pronoun. (30a) is glossed as "The man (My husband) is the one who is walking". But the occurrence of li is unacceptable in (30b) and questionable in (30c). This is in contrast to the set of completely acceptable equative predications in (31) in which the Imperfect form of the verb corresponding to each of the adjectivalizations in (30), is used. Both in the case

31. a. Ir-raġel li jimxi .  
 b. Ir-raġel li jmexxi  
 c. Ir-raġel li jitmexxa

of (30a) and (31), the subject and complement of the equative predication are freely permutable.

Looking back on our discussion we can now draw the following conclusions. From the sentences in (24) it appears that syntactically the form immexxi emerges most clearly with adjectival status, followed by mexxej, whose behaviour bears some resemblance to that of a typical noun, and least of all by miexi, which, on syntactic grounds, can hardly be grouped with the preceding two forms at all, unless the morphological criterion is brought in (cf. the table in (21)), and even here, miexi contrasts to some extent with the other two forms.

From a consideration of equative predications (cf. (29)), it transpires that miexi fits badly in the position characteristically occupied by a nominal, but as can be seen from the sentences in (30) and (31), it goes very well in a position characteristically occupied by a verb.

So although in the preceding discussion the three forms have been grouped together under the label 'adjectivalization', some qualification is necessary. If we take the categories 'noun' and 'verb' to be the two categories most securely established for Maltese (cf. ch.

4, § 3) an intermediate category of adjectives can be set up, defined in terms of morphological, morphosyntactic and syntactic features shared with one or the other, or with both. Then within the category 'adjective' it will be possible to establish a further differentiation, with forms like mmexxi being the central subclass, forms like miexi being closer to verbs, and forms like mexxej being closer to nouns.

In the previous section (ch. 4, § 3) we mentioned an important semantic difference in the inflection for number of nouns and verbs. In the former the cardinality of the journey encoded by the noun is involved, while in the latter it is the cardinality of the person undertaking the journey encoded by the verb.

Now earlier in this section it was pointed out that a typical adjective like 'fqir' inflects for number, and in the singular for gender. But this is exactly the inflectional pattern exhibited by verbs in the third person (cf. the table in (1), ch. 1, § 2.1.1). Even if the adjectivalizations we have been talking about have a partially homonymic inflection (cf. the table in (21)) it is still true to say that with this class of forms, just as in the case of verbs, what is involved is the cardinality of the person undertaking the journey. Furthermore a journey is a second-order entity. Now we saw earlier that miexi encodes a journey in the process of

completion : that is to say, John in (18) acts upon himself (we are dealing with a reflexive causative) to bring about his journey, which at the moment of utterance is not yet complete, but is still in the process of becoming so : given that a journey is a second-order entity and that John's journey in (18) can neither be regarded as past (since it is not yet terminated) nor as happening in the future (since it has already started), we can now understand why Sutcliffe uses the term 'present' in referring to this form.

Now in the case of the passive causative adjectivalization mmexxi, the person undertaking the journey is here encoded as acted upon. Not only the person's journey, but also the fact of his being acted upon, is a second-order entity. If the person involved has been acted upon, then both the future and the present are ruled out. Again, in this light, Sutcliffe's use of the term 'past' in referring to this form, is understandable. The reflexive causative adjectivalization (Sutcliffe's present participle) encodes a process going on at the moment of speaking, the passive causative adjectivalization (Sutcliffe's past participle) encodes a state which already obtains at the moment of speaking.

This leaves the causative adjectivalization. Although here too it is a journey which is encoded, yet the emphasis is clearly on the agent causing the journey.

In the causative verbs associated with this adjectivalization, the causativizing morphology involving the doubling of the middle consonant radical augments the valency of the verb, thus producing an additional place for an expression referring to the initiating agent. And the passivizing morphology involving the prefixing of t- (for the fifth and sixth forms, and n- for the seventh form, cf. ch. 1, §§ 2.2.4 - 2.2.6) renders the agent expression non-nuclear once again. These forms are quite numerous in the language, which is not surprising in view of the high incidence of transitive verbs : indeed in some cases there is not even a verb associated with the adjectivalization, eg. haddied "ironsmith" associated with 'hadid' "iron". In other cases the form may even be associated with a verb only through a suppletive relationship, eg. halliel "thief" but seraq "he stole".

As we have already seen Sutcliffe classifies some of these forms with nouns and some with adjectives. Whether in fact these forms exhibit behaviour more akin to either of these categories will at least in part depend on the nature of the meaning of the associated verb. Thus it is to be expected that the adjectivalization 'qattiel' "murderer" associated with the verb 'qatel' "he killed", will be more noun-like in its behaviour than say an adjectivalization like 'ferrieh' "merry" associated with the inchoative verb 'ferah' "he became glad, he rejoiced" and the causative 'ferrah' "he gladdened", since the

notion of agency (involving a patient as goal of the action) is more strongly present in the former.

In discussing nouns and verbs in the preceding section we noted that adjectivalizations cannot be distinguished from these two categories on the basis of the encoding of specific arrays of participant roles : in fact we have been talking of the reflexive causative, the causative and the passive causative adjectivalization.

In the same section, it was further noted that nouns and verbs are different in that the latter, but not the former, have certain tense and modal implications (cf. ch. 5). The way we ranged the adjectivalizations between nouns and verbs earlier in this section, on the basis of morphological and syntactic criteria correlates also with the pattern which emerges in terms of the distinction just noted. In fact it is only the reflexive causative miexi which has a clear present tense implication. The passive causative mmexxi might be said to have some association with the past, for reasons we noted earlier and the causative mexxej has no tense implications at all.

Now in the introductory presentation we saw that Sutcliffe considers that the normal complement of each form of the verb consists of, among other things, "a participle or participles, present and past" (cf. ch. 1, § 2.5). And in connection with the reflexive causative adjectivaliza-



tion he says "Comparatively little use is made in Maltese of the present participle, with the result that in many verbs, including qatel, it has fallen into disuse" (cf. ch. 1, § 2.5.1). Saying that something has fallen into disuse is to imply its presence and use in the first place. I have not studied enough verb types to be able to commit myself to any position yet, but it seems that this so-called present participle is restricted to reflexive causatives only, many of which happen to be first form verbs. However as we have already seen, first form verbs are not of a uniform type semantically (cf. ch. 3, § 1.5). Adjectivalizations associated with first form inchoatives, such as for example 'biered' "cool" ('bired' "he became cool"), 'sieket' "silent" ('siket' "he became silent") are merely classified as adjectives rather than (present) participles (cf. ch. 1, § 2.4 and Sutcliffe, p. 57).

Again, in connection with the passive causative adjectivalization, he says "The seventh and ninth Forms would not be expected, to have past participles, the former because of its passive and reflexive meanings, the latter because all its verbs are intransitive" (cf. ch. 1, § 2.5.2).

Now a classification of the verb into ten forms as set out in ch. 1, § 2.2 is more or less feasible on morphological and morphophonemic grounds (supplemented



no doubt by a keen awareness of an analogous classification for Classical Arabic). However semantically (and synchronically) this classification breaks down at several points (cf. ch. 3, § 1.5). When Sutcliffe states that the normal complement of each Form consists of a participle or participles, present and past, he is in fact postulating a system which is too rich so that he ends up having to attempt a justification of the gaps in his own system. Let me illustrate this point briefly. We saw in ch. 3, § 1.5 that the verb 'qatel' although belonging to the first form is already, in our terms, a causative (cf. the table in (25), ch. 3). Now this verb has only one derived verb form associated with it, the passive causative seventh form verb 'nqatel'. There is also a passive causative adjectivalization 'maqtul' "killed", the causative adjectivalization we encountered earlier 'qattiel' "murderer", and a Perfect and Imperfect nominalization : 'qatla' and 'qtil' respectively. A classification based on morphological criteria has no way of relating the causative adjectivalization 'qattiel' to the causative verb 'qatel', since in formal terms, the former, qattiel, bears the feature characteristic of second form verbs (the reduplication of the middle radical) and qatel is a first form verb. Similarly the passive causative adjectivalization maqtul cannot be related to the passive causative verb, since the latter, with the form nqatel is classified as a seventh form verb (with the characteristic prefix n-),

while the form maqtul, with no affix except the prefix m- associated with a number of first form verbs, is associated with the first form (cf. ch. 1, § 2.5.2). So when Sutcliffe says that the seventh form cannot be expected to have a past participle because of its passive and reflexive meanings, he is blind to the fact that semantically it already has one. A roughly analogous criticism of his remarks about the ninth form could also be made (cf. ch. 3, § 1.5 and the table in (24b)), but we will not go into this here.

The attempt to establish an alternative classification embracing verbs, nominalizations and adjectivalizations is beyond the scope of this work, but I hope that in the light of the discussion in chapter three, especially § 1.5, and ch. 4, §§ 2 and 4), the general direction such an attempt could follow is fairly clear.

Let us finally take a look at previous treatments of the forms I am calling adjectivalizations. Surprisingly, Cremona is the only one who explicitly links the three forms together. He does this by referring to them as participles (cf. both Taghrif 1924 and Cremona 1962). The participle, he says, is a part of the verb which we use to express the state, the habit and the quality of the noun, and sometimes to express also the noun or substantive (Cremona 1962, p. 113). He divides his participial category into two subclasses : the active

and the passive participle. The active participle class is further subdivided into a present participle (for instance a form like the reflexive causative miexi) and a noun of agent (a form like the causative adjectivalization mexxej). From the preceding discussion (cf. also ch. 3, §§ 1.1 and 1.2) we can understand why Cremona includes both these forms under the term 'active'. For a passive participle like mmexxi (my passive causative adjectivalization) he gives an alternative label, calling it the noun of the patient (cf. Cremona 1962, p. 120). Again the use of the terms 'passive' and 'patient' are quite understandable (cf. ch. 3, § 1.3).

He recognizes further that in the case of verbs expressing motion or state, the active participle (ie. a form like miexi) has the force of a finite verb and signifies what he calls the Actual Present tense (Cremona 1962, p. 116; we will be looking at this question in ch. 5). For a form like mexxej he seems to be saying something like the following (his meaning is not quite clear) : "such a form is used more as an adjectival substantive or as an agent or as an adjectival noun" (1962, p. 117). Whatever the precise meaning intended by Cremona, note that he is aware of the oscillation in the behaviour of this form we talked about earlier.

Aquilina's treatment is not significantly different from Sutcliffe's. For the reflexive causative adjectivaliza-

tion he says that "in Maltese, with few exceptions, only intransitive verbs and a few verbs indicating motion which can be followed by a noun, take the Present (Active) Participles" (1965, p. 145; cf. also 1959, p. 187); and he accords these forms both a verbal and an adjectival function (cf. Aquilina 1965, p. 129).

In connection with the causative adjectivalization he notes that "some grammarians consider the names of 'the doer' of an action... as participial forms or nearly so. Of these only ghaddej... has a verbal function. Ex. Kien ghaddej... 'he was passing'... but kien gattiel which has an adjectival function means 'he was a killer' and not 'he was killing' (1965, p. 152). But earlier in the same work he says "This is the pattern of nouns which indicate names of tradesmen or the doer of the action indicated by the triradical verb" (1965, p. 48). Here, however, he qualifies his attribution of nominal status to the forms by noting, "These word-forms have also an adjectival function" (1965, p. 49). And in his earlier work he says of the form that "The semantic function is both nominal (*Nomina Agentis*) and descriptive at the same time" (1959, p. 194).

The passive causative adjectivalization is characterized as having the function of an adjective (cf. 1965, p. 147), but this is qualified in the earlier work, by attributing to the form both a descriptive and a nominal

function (cf. 1959, p. 214).

For the reflexive causative adjectivalization. Schabert says "Ein Partizip Aktiv ist nicht frei bildbar. In partizipialer, d.h. verbaler Funktion existiert es nur von bestimmten Verben der Bewegung, bei denen es statt des Imperfekts stehen kann und diesem im allgemeinen sogar vorgezogen wird, jedoch nicht, wenn das Imperfekt jussivische Bedeutung hat" (Schabert 1976, p. 142). Schabert is right in saying that the form is not freely derivable, but he is wrong in saying it is limited only to verbs of motion (cf. among others, rieded associated with 'raqad' "he slept" and liebes, 'libes' "he dressed"). It is also true that this form occurs frequently instead of a finite (Imperfect) verb, but as we shall be seeing later (ch. 5), there are differences of meaning involved, so that it is not correct to say that it replaces the Imperfect verb (even allowing for Schabert's own qualification).

Borg (1978) includes a consideration of the causative adjectivalization in his chapter on the noun (cf. p. 269) saying simply that "this pattern denotes chiefly habitual or professional activity". Once he relegates the form to nominal status he can then say "Most Form II verbs in Maltese display participial forms (invariably passive in meaning)" but as I noted in my criticism above of Sutcliffe's classification this violates the semantic

symmetry one can postulate, not without justification, in connection with these forms, since what Borg calls a Form II participle (ie. a form like immexxi) can be associated naturally with the passive causative verb, while his "pattern denoting habitual or professional activity" is the adjectivalization associated with the causative.

## 5. The verb of location

As pointed out in ch. 2, § 2.1, the verb 'qaghad' "he was (physically) located" is typically used in Maltese to predicate of first-order entities their location in space, as in the sentence in (32). The verb is in the

32. Ġanni qaghad id- dar  
       he stayed the house  
       "John stayed at home"

Perfect form, just as in the case of 'mexa' which was discussed earlier (cf. ch. 4, § 1). Of the latter we said that it encodes an extended journey, which in the case of the Perfect verb is represented as completed before the moment of utterance. Correspondingly S and G in the figure in (4), ch. 4, § 1 symbolize the physical source and goal of the journey, but in the context of this figure their location to the left of  $t_0$  is in



addition, an attempt to represent the meaning of the Perfect. Now obviously in the case of 'qaghad' in (32) there can be no question of a physical source or goal, or of physical movement for that matter either, since this is a verb of location. However we can interpret (32) as encoding a period of time in which John was at a particular location, and since the verb is in the Perfect, this period of time is prior to  $t_0$  (cf. the figure in (4), ch. 4, § 1). From this it follows that if the point in time at which the period of John's location commences, is situated at  $t_{-x}$ , then the point in time at which this same period expires is at  $t_{-x+y}$ . In effect we have another journey, transposed in this case to the time dimension. So we can say that while 'mexa' encodes a physical journey through space, 'qaghad' encodes an abstract journey through time. The verb in the sentence in (33) is in the Imperfect form. Falling back on our discussion of the Imperfect verb 'jimxi' (cf. ch. 4, § 1) we will say that

33. Ġanni joqghod id-dar  
 "John stays at home"

the verb in (33) encodes an infinite series of repetitions of the abstract journey of location. The matter does not quite stop here however, as a glance at the gloss for the sentence in (34) will reveal. The Imperfect form of the verb of physical location is one way of rendering the



34. Ġanni joqghod il- Belt  
       he stays the city  
       "John lives in Valletta"

concept of residence in Maltese. The notion does not come out in (33) however, and this can probably be explained in terms of the notion of conversational implicature (cf. Grice 1975). Since 'id-dar' in (33) refers to the place people usually reside in (in a Maltese context) an interpretation of the verb in the sense of "residence" would be tautologous, so the sentence is interpreted as a statement about John's habit of staying indoors (rather than, say, going out). In (34) on the other hand, John's place of residence is being identified (Valletta, rather than say, Sliema) so the interpretation in the sense of "residence" follows naturally. Notice however that the interpretation of an infinite series of repetitions (of the abstract journey through time of location) holds good for both the sentences in (33) and (34).

The form qieghed in (35) is the reflexive causative

35. Ġanni qieghed id-dar  
       "John is at home"

adjectivalization corresponding to miexi (cf. ch. 4, § 4). The period of time through which John's abstract journey

of location takes place in (35) is represented as not yet over at  $t_0$ . In effect this form is used in Maltese as a sort of locative (cf. ch. 1, § 5.4); however there are some problems which unfortunately we can only hint at here, as a closer investigation will take us beyond the scope of the present study. The sentence in (35) is somehow marked. A much more natural and neutral version would be simply 'Ġanni d-dar' with the adjectivalization omitted and the appropriate intonation pattern. (35) could perhaps be the statement in response to the assertion that John is somewhere else, although in this case the response 'Ġanni d-dar qiegħed', with the adjectivalization in final position is perhaps more appropriate. Clearly the resolution of this problem will have to await a study at least of word-order in general in Maltese, as well as the interaction of word-order and information structure. In what follows I bypass the problem of the possibly optional status of the locative adjectivalization, considering only certain utterances expressing location in which there is no overt verbal form (or the adjectivalization 'qiegħed').

36. a. Pawlu d- dar

the house

"Paul is at home"

b. Marija l- knisja

the church

"Mary is at church"

36. c. Ġanni l- għalqa .

the field

"John is in the field"

d.? Ġanni l- ġnien

the garden

e. Ġanni fil-ġnien

"John is in the garden"

In all the sentences in (36), except (36e), the apposition of the subject nominal (a proper name) with the locative expression (a nominal consisting of the definite article preceding a noun form) results in the meaning of location of the person (identified by the subject nominal) within the place referred to by the locative expression. The sentence in (36d) however seems odd to me, but the introduction of the preposition 'fi' before the definite article within the locative nominal (as in (36e)) restores the acceptability of the utterance.

The subject nominals in the sentences in (37) also contain first-order nouns, but the entities referred to are lower down on the scale of first-order entities

37. a. It- tifel id- dar

the boy the house

"The boy is at home"

b.? It-tifel il- ġnien

the boy the garden

37. c. It-tifel fil-<sup>•</sup>gnien

"The boy is in the garden"

d. I<sup>•</sup>c- <sup>•</sup>cavetta fil- kexxun

the key in the drawer

"The key is in the drawer"

e.x I<sup>•</sup>c-<sup>•</sup>cavetta l-kexxun

f. Is- sigaretti fil- kaxxa

the cigarettes in the box

"The cigarettees are in the box"

g.x Is-sigaretti l-kaxxa

than those referred to in the sentences in (36) (cf. my remarks about a hierarchy of first-order entities, ch. 2, § 2.3). Notice that in the case of (37b) and (37c), although the version with the preposition is definitely to be preferred, I cannot exclude (37b) as a sentence in Maltese. But in the case of 'i<sup>•</sup>c-<sup>•</sup>cavetta' and 'is-sigaretti' in (37d) - (37g) the presence of the preposition is obligatory.

Castles (1975, p. 31) and Zammit Mangion (1977, p. 185) note some instances where no preposition appears in locative sentences. Krier (1975, pp. 100-103) also considers the problem, but as can be seen from the sentences in (36e) and (37d) - (37g) her conclusion "que c'est une des caractéristiques du maltais de "sous-entendre" le fonctionnel dans les syntagmes indiquant le lieu..." is in need of careful qualification.

At this point, I want to return to the acceptable sentences without the preposition 'fi' ((36a) - (36c) and (37a)) to note what happens when the preposition is

38. a. Pawlu fid-dar  
       "Paul is in the house"  
       b. Marija fil-knisja  
       "Mary is in the church"  
       c. Ġanni fl-ghalqa  
       "John is in the field"  
       d. It-tifel fid-dar  
       "The boy is in the house"

inserted as in (38). As can be seen from my translations there is a difference between the two sets. In general the location in (38) is merely physical in contrast to that in (36a) - (36c) and (37a) : 'the house' as opposed to 'the home', 'in the church' (as a physical building) as opposed to 'at the church' (for the service). I cannot on the basis of the few examples given, commit myself to any definitive position. All I can do here is suggest that possibly a solution might again lie in the direction of invoking the notion of conversational implicature interacting with the distinction between first and second-order entities. In this case we are dealing only with a hierarchy of first-order entities. Since persons are first-order entities par excellence and correspondingly, the ones encoded by the language as most solidly located

in space, the mere juxtaposition of the expression referring to them, with that referring to their location is enough to express the relationship of location.

But if the preposition is included, and if this inclusion is not tautologous, then another interpretation is to be sought for. The most natural interpretation in the case of (36a) for instance, given the apposition of 'Pawlu' and 'id-dar' is the location of the referent of the former within that of the latter. If the preposition encoding this relationship is explicitated, one possibility (in order to avoid the assumption that its use is merely tautologous) is to conceive of the relationship of the location to Paul as being different from the one which first comes to mind, that is, that the house is not his, or that he merely happens to be in a building which happens to be a house : (38a) could be a marked version of (36a), given a particular information structure of the discourse.

What has been said about the difference between (33) and (34), and between (36a) and (38a) can perhaps be tied in with what we observed earlier (ch. 2, § 2.2) in connection with the distribution of 'lil' before place nominals which are proper names. In so far as 'il-Qorti' in (27iib) is a place name, the interpretation of a physical location or place does not require the occurrence of the preposition (cf. (27iib) and (27iid)). However the

occurrence of 'lil' in (27iia) requires an interpretation which reconciles its association with persons, and its occurrence in a position in which normally it would not be required - the 'institution' interpretation can be seen as the result of this reconciliation.

Notice however that other variables are probably involved. Presumably the size of the entity referred to by the subject nominal relative to the size of the location, comes into play. Another variable could be the typical association of the referents involved within a given cultural context. It is only against a background of expected associations, that the otherwise unnecessary presence of the preposition, triggers off the search for a non-tautologous interpretation. For instance (36e) with the occurrence of the preposition is closer (for me) in its interpretation to that of (36c) without the preposition, than to that of (38c) with the preposition. Presumably this is because 'l-ghalqa' "the field" but not 'il-ḡnien' "the garden" is typically associated for me, with a place of work, so that unless there is some information to the contrary, the mere juxtaposition of the nominal referring to the person and the nominal referring to the place, is interpreted as signifying a relation of location. However in the case of 'il-ḡnien' this same relation has to be specified via the preposition, since for me it is not typically associated with, say, a man's place of work.



In the case of (36c) and (38c) it seems to me that there are at least two differences : use of the version without the preposition (ie. (36c)) implies that the location is a normal one for John, whereas in the case of the version with the preposition (ie (38c)) it is more as if John's location at a particular moment happens to be the particular one encoded by the sentence. (36c) but not (38c) could perhaps also be taken to imply that the location is known to both the addresser and the addressee, but at this stage I am not sure whether this distinction can be expressed in terms of the opposition 'given - new' within the information structure of the sentence (cf. my remarks about the sentence in (35)).

As noted in ch. 2, § 2.1, in the case of second-order entities proper we have the appearance of the verb 'gara'. Of the two sentences in (39a), (i) seems the most neutral, whereas (ii) with the insertion of the preposition

39. a. i L- incident gara l- pjazza  
           the incident he happened the square  
           "The incident happened in the square"
- ii L-incident gara fil- pjazza  
                                   in the square  
           "The incident happened in the square"
- b.x L-incident fil-pjazza

39. c. i L-incident gara fil- hamsa  
in the five

"The incident happened at five o'clock"

ii \* L-incident gara l-hamsa

d. i L-incident gara l-Hamis  
Thursday

"The incident happened on Thursday"

ii \* L-incident gara fil-Hamis

seems somehow marked, (ai) for instance might be used by a villager in conversation with his neighbour, with reference to the village square familiar to both of them. (aai) on the other hand, might be used by one of the villagers in giving evidence in court before persons not from his village (cf. the remarks, above, about the contrast between (36c) and (38c)).

The sentences in (39c) and (39d) illustrate the obligatory presence of the preposition in the case of time reference which is strictly punctual (ie. (39c)) and its obligatory absence in the case of reference to a period of time (39d).

The sentences in (40) finally are meant to indicate that when locational relations are involved, other than mere containment, the preposition is obligatorily present both for entities high upon the first-order scale and for entities lower down the same scale (cf. ch. 2, § 2.3).

40. a. i Ganni ghand iz- ziju  
at the uncle

"John is at his uncle's"

ii Ic- cavetta ghand il- purtinar  
the key at the porter

"The key is with the porter"

b. i Marija fuq it- terrazin  
on the terrace

"Mary is on the terrace"

ii It- tazzi fuq l- ixkaffa  
the glasses on the shelf

"The glasses are on the shelf"

The remarks in the preceding pages will help to demonstrate that there are many problems awaiting resolution in connection with the relationship of location, a study of which would take us beyond the scope of the present study. Since however we will be appealing later (cf. ch. 5, §§ 2.1, 2.2) to the adjectivalization 'qieghed' it is as well to keep in mind the problematic background to its distribution.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## 1.1 Summary

The final chapter starts with a brief review of the characterization of the opposition Perfect / Imperfect in treatments of Maltese (§ 1.2). In § 2.1 a further aspectual distinction is introduced, involving the insertion of the form qed before the verb in the Imperfect, and referred to as the qed construction. § 2.2 examines the evidence for the proposed identification of this form qed as the abbreviation of the adjectivalization 'qieghed', associated with the verb of physical location 'qaghad'. The meaning of the qed construction is examined in § 3.1 and contrasted to that of the Imperfect and the adjectivalization 'miexi'. The Imperfect is characterised as typically encoding unrestricted habituality, the qed construction as encoding restricted habituality and the adjectivalization 'miexi' as encoding progressivity. § 3.2 exemplifies the interaction of aspect and the aspectual character of the verb (to which reference is made in ch. 1, § 1) by examining briefly the qed construction involving the Imperfect of 'telaq' "he left" (encoding a border-crossing followed by an extended journey) and of 'wasal' "he arrived" (encoding an extended journey followed by a border-crossing. The latter, unlike 'mexa' "he walked" and 'telaq' "he left"

lacks a (reflexive causative) adjectivalization, and it is noted that the qed construction with the Imperfect of 'wasal' is ambiguous between a restricted habitual and a progressive interpretation. It is further noted that in the case of the qed construction involving the Imperfect of the inchoative ninth form verb 'twal' "he grew long", the restricted habitual interpretation seems to be excluded. This section closes with another look at the adjectivalization 'miexi' and the qed construction with the Imperfect of 'mexa' : with appropriate temporal specification, it is shown that 'miexi', besides progressivity, can also encode restricted habituality, while 'qed jimxi' allows, in addition to restricted habituality, the encoding of progressivity.

§ 3.3 takes a further look at the aspectual oppositions (characterised in § 3.1) with respect to the relation between aspect and tense. § 3.3.1 looks at the notion of completion and the association of the Perfect with past time, as well as the unanalysability of the situation encoded by the Perfect, which however does not necessarily exclude the specification of duration. § 3.3.2 examines the association of the Imperfect with present and future time, while in § 3.3.3 the adjectivalization 'miexi' is contrasted with the Perfect and the Imperfect, and found to be closer to the latter with respect to the relation to non-past time.

The relationship between aspect and modality is looked at briefly in § 3.4 and it is noted that the Imperfect, but not the Perfect, encodes an element of modality, which is seen as deriving from the aspectual opposition involved. This time the adjectivalization 'miexi' (and the ged construction with a progressive interpretation) is found to be closer to the Perfect than to the Imperfect. § 4 examines a construction used specifically to express future time and involving the form sa preceding the verb in the Imperfect. Sa is put into correspondence with the adjectivalization 'sejjer' associated suppletively with the verb 'mar' "he went".

§ 5 is devoted to a study of the verb 'kien' "he was" referred to in treatments of Maltese as a copula and an auxiliary. The aspectual distinction Perfect kien / Imperfect ikun is first of all examined in § 5.1 in relation to the encoding of physical location. The Perfect kien expresses past tense via the interaction of aspect and the lexical meaning of the verb, while the Imperfect ikun expresses modality, again following from what one might expect of a verb in the Imperfect, but in this case, in conjunction with the meaning of "being". From a consideration of predications of location, as well as of ascriptive and equative predications in § 5.2, it is concluded that a special status (such as that of "copula") for the occurrence of 'kien' in these contexts

is unnecessary, if not also incorrect. § 5.3 next examines the question of whether a special status is required for the occurrence of 'kien' in certain passive constructions, and in sentences preceding another verb (in the Perfect or the Imperfect) or an adjectivalization. Again there seems to be no need for according 'kien' in these contexts a special status such as that of being an "auxiliary" verb.

In § 6 the aspectual oppositions are examined once more, this time with respect to the distinction between absolute and relative tense. It is concluded that the Perfect is associated with absolute (past) tense, but in the case of the Imperfect it does not seem appropriate to speak of an association with absolute tense. In § 7, in view of this difference (as well as other points mentioned here) Comrie's (1976) characterization of the distinction between the Perfective and the Imperfective in Written Arabic as one of a "combined tense / aspect opposition" is rejected for Maltese, in favour of an interpretation of the aspectual opposition as the fundamental one, with tense and modal associations deriving from it.

## 1.2 Terminology

The morphological opposition mexa / jimxi is referred to in many treatments of Maltese by the term 'tense'



(cf. for instance, Sutcliffe 1936, p. 66 : "The indicative contains two simple tenses, the perfect and the imperfect"). In this study I refer to the opposition as being one of aspect (in the wide sense mentioned in ch. 1, § 1) while recognising that other factors are involved, such as the association with a particular temporal reference (cf. ch. 5, § 3.3. and § 6) and with modality (cf. ch. 5, § 3.4). In this chapter I use the term 'tense' in the sense of 'time-reference' (cf. also ch. 5, § 6 for a further distinction within the notion of 'time-reference').

In discussing the opposition between forms like mexa and jimxi it was pointed out earlier (cf. ch. 4, § 1) that the terms 'Perfect' and 'Imperfect' were not particularly suitable. The Perfect form of the verb encodes a completed journey and in this sense of 'wholeness' the use of the term 'Perfect', is understandable. However if this sense for the 'Perfect' is granted, then the 'Imperfect' can only mean that the journey encoded by the verb is not complete. Now we have already seen that it is the reflexive causative adjectivalization 'miexi' that encodes the journey as incomplete, that is, as still in progress (cf. ch. 4, § 4). The form jimxi encodes an unbounded series of repetitions of completed journeys. In this case the only thing about this so-called Imperfect which could be construed as 'incomplete' would be the series itself which is represented as unbounded, and hence in a certain sense, as ongoing.

Strictly speaking, therefore, the contrast 'Perfect' : 'Imperfect' applies to the opposition mexa : miexi and not to mexa : jimxi.

Now although Sutcliffe uses the traditional terminology Perfect / Imperfect, he says simply of the latter that it "may denote future action or habitual action" (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.1) and this is correct as far as it goes (cf. the discussion of the Imperfect especially in ch. 5, § 3.3.2; we will be taking a closer look at the future in Maltese later on in this chapter, cf. ch. 5, § 4).

Cremona (1962) distinguishes a number of uses, both of the Perfect and of the Imperfect. The former, he says (p. 57), is used when an action is done in the past and has nothing to do with the present, and in this use he compares the Perfect to the English 'Present Perfect', a comparison qualified by the remark : "when an action happens in the past but retains some ties with the present". However I cannot find any grounds for this distinction in Maltese, even considering Cremona's own examples. His remarks were probably based on examples like those in (1), in which the time adverbial might be understood as strengthening the impression that unless information is given to the contrary, the state of affairs encoded by the verb is unchanged. Still in the case of (1a) say, the time reference of the Perfect verb cannot be interp-

1. a. Dil-      ġimgha ma . hdimt      xejn  
          this the week    neg. I worked nothing  
          "This week I didn't work at all"
- b. Ftit      ilu ġie      habib    ghandi  
          a little ago he came friend at me  
          "A friend visited me some time ago"

reted as going beyond the span of a week indicated by the adverbial, and since the time span is referred to via a deictically marked expression ('this week') this could very well give rise to the impression of 'present relevance':

but it is not to be attributed to the Perfect verb.

There is also a passing reference to an aspectual characteristic : the verb in the Perfect is also said to denote a completed action (Cremona 1962, p. 49).

The Imperfect is characterised somewhat more ambiguously. Both in Taghrif (1924) and in Cremona (1962, p. 49), the Imperfect is said to denote an action "happening in time which is passing or which is yet to come". The reference to "time yet to come" can be understood to mean that the Imperfect can denote futurity (cf. below, § 3.3.2). But "time which is passing" is ambiguous at least between an interpretation of progressivity, in which case what is in question, is not the Imperfect but an adjectivalization like 'miexi'; and an interpretation of habituality or generic statement (the latter explicitly mentioned by Cremona as an instance of the use of the Imperfect : cf.

1962, p. 56). In this case, the ongoingness of the habit, that is, the unfolding of the series of repetitions, can be understood as partially isomorphic with a characterisation in terms of "time which is passing". However Cremona also points out that the Imperfect is used when an action happens contemporaneously with the moment of speaking.

Aquilina (1965, p. 129) also characterises the Imperfect as corresponding "to the Present and frequently to the Future" but in his earlier work (1959, p. 254) he is more explicit and qualifies the correspondence to the present with the term "continuous present". For this characterisation the same criticism made of Cremona's term in the paragraph above, applies.

Saydon (1966, p. 133) notes that "a distinction must be made... between the imperfect and the participle [ie. an adjectivalization like 'miexi'] both of which denote a continuous action. The former represents an action in its progressive duration, the latter is an action in its continuous duration". Even if this alleged distinction (in so far as it can be interpreted as a distinction at all) were to be granted, the meaning of "progressive duration" for the Imperfect is certainly not typical at least of the verbs under consideration in this study (but cf. ch. 5, § 3.2 for the interaction of aspect and the aspectual character of the verb).

Vella (1970, p. 201; p. 281) explicitly states that the Imperfect denotes incompleted actions and so does Borg (1978, p. 208). For a criticism of the notion of incompleteness applied to the Imperfect, cf. the opening paragraph in this section (§ 1.2).

As noted in ch. 4, § 1, I will continue to use the terms 'Perfect' and 'Imperfect' as a convenient label to identify the forms of the verb in question, but they are not to be taken as semantic characterisations of the forms they refer to. Also in this chapter, I use the term 'adjectivalization' instead of '(present) participle' to refer to a reflexive causative adjectivalization like 'miexi' (cf. ch. 4, § 4), but again, this is simply to identify the form in question. Other terms will be introduced to characterize meaning.

## 2.1 A further aspectual distinction

Let us at this stage bring together our observations about aspectual distinctions made in some of the sections in chapter four (§ 1, § 4 and § 5). Some of the sentences discussed in these sections are reproduced in (2). The sentences in (i) exemplify the Perfect form of the verb, those in (ii) the Imperfect and those in (iii) contain the adjectivalization which can occur in the same position as the finite form of the verb. (2ia) encodes a complete concrete journey of movement from one point to another,

2. i a. Ġanni mexa mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John walked from home to school"
- b. Ġanni qaghad id-dar  
 "John stayed at home"
- ii a. Ġanni jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John walks from home to school"
- b. Ġanni joqghod id-dar / joqghod il-Belt  
 "John stays at home / lives in Valletta"
- iii a. Ġanni miexi mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John is walking from home to school"
- b. Ġanni qieghed id-dar  
 "John is at home"

while (2ib) encodes a complete abstract journey of location from one point in time to another. The sentences in (ii) encode an unbounded series of repetitions of such journeys (note the different lexicalisation in the English translation of the two sentences in (2iib) : cf. the discussion of the sentences in (103) and (104), ch. 4, § 5). The sentence in (iiia) encodes a concrete journey in progress from one point to another, that in (iiib) an abstract journey in progress from one point in time to another.

Now in ch.1, § 1, it was noted that besides these forms, there occurred also the form qed preceding the Imperfect form of the verb. This construction is exemplified in the sentences in (3) and on the face of it does not differ much in meaning from the sentences with the adjectivaliza-

3. a. Ġanni qed jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John is walking from home to school"
- b. Ġanni qed joqghod id-dar / qed joqghod il-Belt  
 "John is staying at home / is living in Valletta"

tion in (2iii), as can be seen from the corresponding translations. For the sake of convenience I will refer to this construction as the qed construction, but it will have to be borne in mind that it is the Imperfect form of the verb which figures in it. Before attempting an analysis of the sentences in (3), let us briefly review what has been written about this construction.

Sutcliffe doesn't talk about the form qed directly, but in his vocabulary (p. 271) he says simply that it is the abbreviation of qieghed, the present participle of 'qaghad' "to stay, remain". In talking about "other tense meanings" (after mentioning the opposition Perfect / Imperfect, cf. above, § 1.2) he calls qieghed an auxiliary, which he says "has practically the sense of the English 'being' and is used to denote continuous action" (p. 69). However, in giving an example, namely, 'qieghed joqtol' "he is killing" he goes on to qualify his translation as follows: "he is now engaged in killing" and this would seem to suggest that he regards the construction as encoding a situation contemporaneous with the moment of speaking.



This point about contemporaneity with (in our terms)  $t_0$  (cf. ch. 4, § 1) is explicitly made by Saydon (1935) who says that ged is the abbreviated form of qieghed. The same point is made by Cremona (1962, pp. 59-60), Aquilina (1965, p. 146) and Vella (1970, p. 282).

Although Krier (1975, p. 108) correctly describes the ged construction as expressing "l'aspect duratif" (although the matter is not as straightforward as such a statement might suggest, cf. below, § 3.1 and § 3.2) she apparently does not recognise the locative nature of the meaning of qieghed (which, she says, is abbreviated to ged) since she translates the interrogative sentence

Fejn qeghdin intom?  
 where plural form you (pl.)  
 of 'qieghed'

as "où 'duratif' vous?" ("où êtes-vous?") (cf. my remarks in ch. 1, § 5.4 and ch. 4, § 5 about predications of location, as well as my discussion of the ged construction below (§ 3.1) in which I derive the aspectual meaning of this construction from the meaning of 'qieghed' as the adjectivalization associated with the verb of physical location 'qaghad').

## 2.2 Qed as abbreviation of qieghed

It will be seen from the foregoing review that the identity of qed with qieghed is largely assumed. In this section I propose to review the possible evidence for such an assumption.

It has to be noted first of all that there is a morphological distinction between the two forms : qieghed is one of the forms which realise the adjectivalization 'qieghed' (cf. the table in (21), ch. 4, § 4, for the inflection of adjectivalizations) while qed is just one form alternating with no other.

An appropriate form of 'qieghed' can serve as a locative copula (cf. ch. 4, § 5) but qed cannot occur in this position, as can be seen from the sentences in (4):

4. a. Ġanni qieghed id-dar

"John is at home"

b. x Ġanni qed id-dar

Qed can never occur alone in a sentence, but always in a position preceding an Imperfect form of the verb. In this position it is never stressed, its occurrence does not affect the stress pattern of the following (verbal) form, and it is always pronounced as a unit with the following Imperfect.

Now it is important to note that all occurrences of ged are replaceable by an appropriate form of 'qieghed', as in the sentences in (5) for instance. As far as I can make out, there is no difference in meaning between

5. a. Ġanni ged jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John is walking from home to school"  
 b. Ġanni qieghed jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John is walking from home to school"

(5a) and (5b), not even say, one of emphasis (cf. § 3.1 below for an analysis of the meaning of this construction).

It was pointed out above that ged only occurs before an Imperfect form of the verb. In this respect both qieghed

6. a. Ġanni { ged  
               qieghed } jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John is walking from home to school"  
 b.\* Ġanni { ged  
               qieghed } mexa mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 c.\* Ġanni { ged  
               qieghed } miexi mid-dar sa l-iskola

and ged have a similar distribution, as can be seen from the sentences in (6) : both forms are unacceptable before a Perfect form of the verb, as in (6b); and before an adjectivalization, as in (6c).

There is yet another distributional similarity. It

was pointed out in ch. 1, § 2.1.2, that certain verb lexemes are realized by an Imperfect form only. Now both qed and qieghed are unacceptable before at least two of these verbs (cf. also Schinas 1977, p. 20), as

7. i a. Ġanni jaf 'il Marija  
John he knows to Mary  
"John knows Mary"

b. x Ġanni { qed  
qieghed } jaf 'il Marija

ii a. It- tifel jismu Ġanni  
the boy he is named John  
"The boy's name is John"

b. x It-tifel { qed  
qieghed } jismu Ġanni

shown in the sentences in (7). For the occurrence of the preposition 'lil' before 'Marija' in (7i) cf. the discussion of the sentences in (18), especially (18ii) in ch. 3, § 1.1. For some remarks about the semantics involved in (7) cf. below, § 3.3.1 where the question of the incompatibility of the Perfect with the lexical meaning of these verbs is touched upon. For the moment, note the common distribution of qed and qieghed in (7).

All occurrences of qed, therefore, can be replaced by an appropriate form of 'qieghed', but the converse is not true. In addition, if one bears in mind the status

of the segment represented by the orthographic symbol gh (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.2) the assumption that ged is an abbreviated form of gieghed will not appear unreasonable. In fact I make use of this assumption myself in the discussion that follows below.

### 3. The aspectual oppositions

#### 3.1 The ged construction

In attempting an analysis of the ged construction exemplified in the sentences in (3) we can make use of the characterization of the adjectivalization 'miexi' (cf. ch. 4, § 4) as encoding a concrete journey in progress and of the adjectivalization gieghed / ged as encoding an abstract journey of location in progress. We also mentioned some important clues in the preceding section, namely the non-occurrence of ged with a Perfect verb (which encodes a completed journey) with another adjectivalization (like 'miexi', which encodes a journey in progress), and with a few verbs realized only in the Imperfect, such as 'jaf' "he knows" and 'jismu' "he is named", which encode a state.

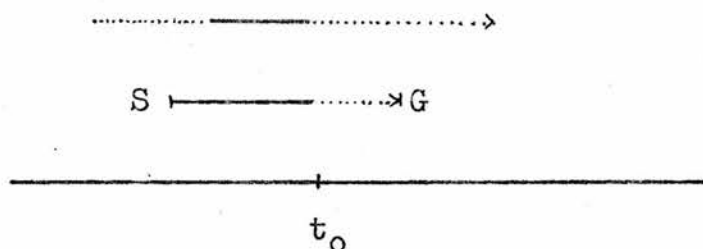
In addition notice the sentences in (8). The sentences in (8iii) enter into a relation of implication (either positively or negatively) with each of the sentences in (8i) and (8ii). These relations are marked on either side

8. i Ġanni jimxi mid-dar      ii Ġanni qed jimxi mid-dar  
 John is walking from      "John is walking from  
 sa l-iskola      sa l-iskola  
 home to school"      home to school"
- ≠ iii a. Ġanni mexa darba biss mid-dar sa l-iskola      ≠  
 once only  
 "John only walked once from home to school"
- ≠ b. Ġanni mexa xi drabi mid-dar sa l-iskola      =  
 some times  
 "John walked a few times from home to school"
- = c. Ġanni mexa hafna drabi mid-dar sa l-iskola      ≠  
 many times  
 "John walked many times from home to school"

of the sentences in (iii). The sentence in (iiia) is implied neither by (8i) with the Imperfect, nor by (8ii) with the qed construction. On the other hand, (iiib) is implied by (8ii) but not by (8i). Conversely, (iiic) is implied by (8i) but not by (8ii).

Let us now bring together our representations of a situation encoded by miexi (cf. the figure in (21), ch. 4, § 4) and of that encoded by the Imperfect jimxi (cf. the figure in (5), ch. 4, § 1). The two are represented in the figure in (9). Now in chapter four, § 1, we characterized the Imperfect as encoding an unbounded series of repetitions of a completed journey, but as Lyons remarks

9. Representation of a situation encoded by the  
qed construction



(1977, p. 716), "the regular iteration of an event creates a series which may be represented as a unitary durative situation with many of the properties of a state". In fact we saw earlier that the verb of physical location in the Imperfect is used in Maltese to express the notion of (permanent) residence (cf. the discussion of the sentences in (33) and (34), ch. 4, § 5).

We noted furthermore that the verb in the Imperfect is used to express generic statements (cf. the sentence in (2), ch. 4, § 1). In addition, Aquilina (1965, p. 219) notes that the Imperfect "besides its usual verbal function, has also an adjectival function..." giving the examples

Ġanni jiekol (Ipf.)

John he eats

"John eats"

and

Ġanni raġel jiekol (Ipf.) hafna

John a man he eats much

"John is a man who eats very much"



On this basis, I will characterise the Imperfect form of the verb as encoding unrestricted habituality. Now if we examine the figure in (9) and the corresponding sentences in (3), reproduced here as (10), we will see that we have some sort of interaction between the encoding

10. a. Ġanni qed jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola

"John is walking from home to school"

b. Ġanni qed joqghod id-dar / qed joqghod il-Belt

"John is staying at home / is living in Valletta"

of a (bounded) journey in progress and of an (unbounded) series of repetitions of such journeys.

In my discussion (of the sentences in (10), and of others in the course of this chapter) I make use of the hypothesis which analyses auxiliaries as main verbs (cf. for instance Huddleston 1974 and 1976, ch. 14). I cannot go into a consideration of this hypothesis here, but I note in passing that the adjectivalizations miexi and gieghed can replace an occurrence of a finite form of the verb (cf. the sentences in (2iii), ch. 5, § 2.1). Furthermore both these adjectivalizations can easily occur in sentences, without a subject being explicitly encoded, since their forms exhibit an inflection like that of a finite verb in the third person (cf. ch. 4, § 4).

So associated with each of the sentences in (10), it

will be assumed that there is a semantic structure containing at least two sentences, the upper one with the locative adjectivalization ged, and the lower one with the verb in the Imperfect. I analyse the upper sentence with the locative adjectivalization, as encoding the location of John in a 'state' (for the use of 'state' in this context, cf. Miller 1971), that is, in my terms, the encoding of an abstract journey (in progress), through time, of location in a 'state'. Note however that the adjectivalization 'qieghed', like 'miexi' encodes one journey in progress. In so far as a distinction could be drawn between the meaning of a form of 'qieghed' and of ged, it would be that the former encodes the progress of an abstract journey (through time) of location in a place or in a state, whereas the latter encodes the progress of an abstract journey of location in a state only (cf. the sentences in (4), ch. 5, § 2.2).

The lower sentence then specifies the nature of the 'state' in which John is located, namely, the series of repetitions of completed journeys (cf. the quotation from Lyons, above).

Taking another look at the figure in (9) we can now specify the nature of the interaction between the encodings of ged and of jimxi / jogghod. The bounded nature of the journey encoded by ged (note in the figure the representation of S and G) is superimposed upon the

unbounded series of repetitions, to give a meaning which I will characterize as 'restricted habitual' in contrast to the characterization 'unrestricted habitual' for the Imperfect (cf. above). The meaning of the adjectivalization can then be characterized as 'progressive' (that is, 'in progress at moment of speaking', cf. below, § 3.3.3, but also § 6). In this sense, Grech (1977, p. 31) is correct in saying that an adjectivalization like hiereg ('hareg' "he went out") denotes the action as not being complete and as being referred to while it is actually taking place. She is also correct in characterizing the Imperfect johrog of the same verb as denoting a habit (more precisely, in our terms, an unrestricted habit), but I do not see any basis for her referring to the action denoted by 'johrog' as also not being complete (cf. in this respect my criticism of the attribution of the notion of incompleteness to the Imperfect in ch. 5, § 1.2).

### 3.2 The interaction of aspect and aspectual character exemplified

In the preceding section we came up with a more or less neat characterization of some of the forms of the verb 'mexa' as follows: the Imperfect jimxi was characterised as encoding unrestricted habituality, the adjectivalization miexi as encoding progressivity, and the qed construction qed jimxi as encoding restricted habituality. In

chapter 2, § 1, the aspectual character of 'mexa' (for the term 'aspectual character' cf. ch. 1, § 1) was characterized as encoding an extended journey. Let us now look at a verb with a different aspectual character. In ch. 2, § 1.1 the verb 'telaq' "he left" was characterized as encoding a border-crossing followed by an extended journey. The adjectivalization tielaq in (11a) encodes

11. a. L- ajruplan tielaq issa  
           the aeroplane he is leaving now  
           "The aeroplane is leaving now"
- b. L-ajruplan qed jitlaq kmieni (daž- žmien)  
                                   he leaves early this the time)  
           "The aeroplane is leaving early these days"
- c.? L-ajruplan qed jitlaq issa
- d. L-ajruplan qed jasal issa /  
                                   he arrives now  
           "The aeroplane is arriving now /
- kmieni (daž-žmien)  
                                   early  
                                   early these days"

a journey in progress and the qed construction in (11b) encodes a restricted habit (note the adverbial 'these days' at least implicitly present in this sentence). The sentence in (11c) can also be understood as encoding one journey in progress, like that in (11a), although to me

(11c) sounds a bit odd, and in my speech, for the progressive interpretation (11a) rather than (11c) would occur.

The sentence in (11d) contains an occurrence of the ged construction with the Imperfect of 'wasal' "he arrived", which was characterized in ch. 2, § 1.1 as encoding an extended journey followed by a border-crossing. There is no adjectivalization comparable to tielaq (or miexi) associated with 'wasal', but notice that ged jasal in (11d) is ambiguous between a progressive and a restricted habitual interpretation.

Let us now turn to another verb, this time the inchoative ninth form verb 'twâl' "he grew / became long" which encodes an abstract extended journey (cf. the discussion of the table in (2b), ch. 3, § 1.5). Unlike reflexive causatives we are dealing here merely with a traveller role : in the case of a verb like 'mexa' the same entity plays both a traveller and an agent (ie. superordinate source) role (cf. ch. 3, § 1.2). The verb 'twâl' has an adjectivalisation 'twil' "long" associated with it. Now in the sentences in (12) the feminine form of 'twil' in (ib) occupies a position analogous to that of miexi in (ia), and however one characterises the meaning of (ib) (something I will not attempt in this study), it is clear that in both (ia) and (ib) we have to do with one journey (or one unit of extent). In (12iia) the verb in the Imperfect encodes a series of repetitions of such 'units

12. i a. Ġanni miexi mid-dar sa l-iskola

"John is walking from home to school"

b. It- triq twila mid- dar

the road long (fem.) from the house

"The road extends from the house

sa l- iskola

to the school

to the school"

ii a. Il- haxix jitwal malajr

the grass he grows long quickly

"Grass grows (tall) quickly"

? b. It- tifel jitwal malajr

the boy

iii a. Ġanni qed jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola

"John is walking from home to school"

b. Ġanni qed jitwal minn ġurnata għall-ohra

from a day to another

"John is growing taller from day to day"

c. It- tfal qed jitwalu malajr

the children quickly

"Children grow tall quickly

daz- zmien

this the time

these days"

of extent' but notice that the subject noun is a collective (or rather in my terms, an Imperfect nominalization). On the other hand the sentence in (iib) with a subject noun referring to one individual, seems odd. Now, coming to the sentences in (iii) notice that although (iiib) is analogous to (iiia) (with abstract, instead of concrete source and goal) and the qed construction figures in both, yet it is a progressive interpretation which comes to mind for (iiib) : the restricted habitual interpretation we would have expected of the qed construction seems to be excluded. On the other hand (iiia) is ambiguous between the two interpretations (cf. the discussion of the sentences in (13) below). It seems that (iiib) is closer in meaning to (ia) (in terms of the aspectual distinction under consideration) than to (iiia). It might well be the case that the Imperfect interacting with certain lexical meanings (such as that of the inchoative interpretation of 'twal') results in a more pronounced resemblance to the encoding of stativity (cf. the quotation from Lyons in § 3.1 above) and this would account for the oddity of (12iib) and the apparent anomaly in (iiib) : a state is less compatible, than say an event, with the encoding of (restricted) habituality and the notion of iterativity involved in the latter. In the case of (iiic) a number of journeys (or 'units of extent') are encoded, but notice that the subject noun is plural so that one journey only is attributed to each of the individuals referred to by



the subject expression.

The above discussion is one example of the interaction between the aspectual character of a verb and the aspectual distinctions we have been considering. As noted in ch. 1, § 1 this area does not fall within the scope of the present study. However there is more to the problem. Notice first of all that in the case of the verb 'wasal' "he arrived" which has no adjectivalization corresponding to 'miexi' associated with it, the ged construction is ambiguous between a progressive and a restricted habitual interpretation (cf. the discussion of the sentence in (11d) above).

Now observe the sentences in (13). It is clear that

13. a. Ġanni miexi                      mid-dar sa l-iskola  
he is walking

"John is walking from home to school

daż-           zmien, għax il-  
this the time because the  
these days, because the

karoizzi mhux qed jahdmu  
cars neg. they are working  
buses aren't running"

13. b. Ġanni qed jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 he walks

"John is walking from home to school

l- lum, ghax ghadni kif  
 the day because I just how  
 today, because I've just seen

rajtu fit- triq  
 I saw him in the road  
 him on the road"

in (13a) the adjectivalization miexi now receives a restricted habitual interpretation, while the qed construction in (13b) admits a progressive interpretation, although (13b) can still be construed as encoding more than one journey by John (occurring in the course of the day).

However having noted that the adjectivalization miexi does not exclude a restricted habitual interpretation, and that the qed construction does not exclude a progressive one, in my discussion of aspect in this chapter, I will continue to operate with the characterizations noted in the preceding sections. Specifically, in the case of 'mexa', the Perfect encodes a completed journey, the Imperfect an unbounded series of repetitions of completed journeys or an unrestricted habit, the adjectivalization primarily a journey in progress and the qed construction primarily a restricted habit. For verbs analogous in

character to 'mexa', but which lack a (reflexive causative) adjectivalization, I will assume that the ged construction is ambiguous between a progressive and a restricted habitual interpretation.

The ambiguity of this construction is not completely unexpected, since after all one of the elements involved (the form ged) encodes progressivity (if our analysis is granted) and the other (the Imperfect) encodes (unrestricted) habituality. In this sense, too, the ged construction fits in with languages in which habituality and progressivity go together (cf. Lyons 1977, p. 716) while a verb like 'mexa' with the opposition ged jimxi / miexi fits in with languages in which habituality and progressivity are grammaticalised differently.

### 3.3 Aspect and tense

In chapter four § 1 we talked about the distinction between the Perfect and the Imperfect largely in terms of aspect (one completed journey vs. an unbounded series of such completed journeys). However implicit in that discussion is the question of the relation of aspect to tense, and in fact, in my graphic representations, I attempt to characterise the aspectual distinction in relation to the moment of speaking  $t_0$ .

### 3.3.1 The Perfect

In trying to arrive at a characterization of the meaning of the adjectivalization 'miexi' in ch. 4, § 4, we contrasted a set of implications associated with it to a set associated with the Perfect form of the verb (cf. the sentences in (19i) and (19ii)). The set associated with the Perfect is reproduced here in (14), together with an additional implication not mentioned earlier. The situation encoded by the verb in the Perfect in (14a) implies that John left the source of his journey (14b)

14. a. Ġanni mexa mid-dar sa l-iskola  
       "John walked from home to school"
- > b. Ġanni telaq mid-dar  
       "John left home"
- > c. Ġanni kien miexi           mid-dar sa l-iskola  
               he was he walking  
       "John was walking from home to school"
- > d. Ġanni wasal sa l-iskola  
       "John arrived at school"

and that he arrived at the goal of his journey (14d). Furthermore the completed journey encoded in (14a) implies that the journey was in progress, as in (14c), at some time before it was completed. Notice that the verbs in (14b) and (14d) are in the Perfect form, and that the

adjectivalization miexi with a progressive interpretation in (14c) is obligatorily preceded (in view of its relationship with 'mexa' in (14a)) by the Perfect form of the verb 'kien' "he was". We shall be looking at this verb below : here I will mention only that it is regarded in most treatments of Maltese as an auxiliary verb occurring before another verb to express past tense (cf. ch. 5, § 5.3).

In view of the set of implications in (14), Comrie (1976, p. 18) is right in pointing out that the use of the term 'completed' puts too much emphasis on the termination of the situation, whereas the use of the perfective puts no more emphasis, necessarily, on the end of a situation than on any other part of the situation, but rather, that all parts of the situation are presented as a single whole. However the Perfect in Maltese carries also past tense overtones, so that for instance of the sentences in (15), (15c) is unacceptable and (15b) is interpreted as referring to a moment of time

15.

Ganni mexa mid-dar sa l-iskola  
 "John walked from home to school"

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| } | a. il-bierah<br>yesterday |
|   | b. il-lum<br>today        |
|   | * c. ghada<br>tomorrow    |

in the period referred to by 'today' which is already past the moment of speaking (that is, the journey encoded by the verb has already taken place at  $t_0$ ). We shall be examining the nature of this association with past tense more closely below (cf. ch. 5, § 6), but for the moment I rely on the sentences in (15) to justify my use of the term 'completed' in the sense of an association with past time, and not in the sense of more emphasis on the termination of the journey encoded by the Perfect.

Beyond the question of an association with past time however, there can be no doubt that the Perfect encodes a situation as complete : the sentence in (16) doubtlessly

16. Ġanni kiteb l- ittra dal- ghodu imma  
       he wrote the letter this the morning but  
       "John wrote the letter this morning but

ghadu ma spiċċahix  
       he still neg. he finished her  
       he hasn't finished it yet"

expresses a contradiction, at least in Maltese. And (17) can only be interpreted as meaning that the program is serialized, such that while it is true that John heard (one unit of) the program, it is also true that the program is going on - otherwise (17) like (16) expresses a contradiction.

17. Ġanni sema l- programm li għadu sejjer  
 he heard the program that he still he going  
 "John heard the program which is still going on"

Miller (1971) interprets the notion of completion in terms of 'states' by taking the traditional description of an action as having a beginning, a middle and an end and interpreting these as 'going into a state, being in a state and coming out of a state'.

In my case the notion is expressed via the idea of a journey which is presented as complete. Of course the notion of a journey is itself semantically complex and will have to be interpreted in terms of an underlying conjunction of propositions including among others propositions expressing the existence of a traveller, of a source and a goal, and of the movement of the traveller from the source to the goal (cf. ch. 1, § 3). In the case of (17), for instance, John goes from the state of not having heard the program to the state in which he has heard it.

As noted by Comrie (1976, p. 22), perfectivity is by no means incompatible with overt expression of the duration of a situation, as can be seen from the sentences in (18). This does not mean however that the situation encoded by the Perfect is presented as analysable. The sentence in (14c) is an implication following from (14a):  
 that is, if (14a) was true at a given time, then (14c)



18. a. Ġanni mexa mid-dar sa l-iskola fi  
he walked in

"John walked from home to school in

•  
zmien siegha

time an hour

an hour"

- b. Marija qaghdet id- dar il- gurnata kollha  
she stayed the house the day all of her  
"Mary stayed at home the whole day"

was necessarily true at a time prior to that. But this is not to say that the Perfect encodes the situation with distinct phases. Thus in the sentence in (19) the situation in which John breaks his leg (and encoded via a Perfect

19. \* Ganni kiser siequ waqt li laghab  
he broke leg his during that he played  
"John broke his leg while he played

ma' shabu

with companions his

with his friends"

verb) cannot be situated within the situation encoded by the verb 'laghab' "he played" which is in the Perfect form. Since the Perfect encodes an event, the axiom enunciated by Lyons (1977, § 15.6) holds, namely "given the unidimensionality of time and our punctual conceptualization of

events (ie. as second-order entities with position, but no magnitude, in the continuum of time) two or more events may be ordered in terms of precedence and successivity, but one event cannot be included, wholly or partly, within another".

Earlier in this chapter it was pointed out that the adjectivalization gieghed / ged cannot occur before the Perfect form of the verb (cf. the sentence in (6b), ch. 5, § 2.2). We can now see why this is so : gieghed encodes a journey in progress, but the Perfect encodes a journey as complete (and unanalysable) so that the meaning of the two forms is incompatible.

In ch. 1, § 2.1.1 it was pointed out that certain verb lexemes are realised only by a form in the Imperfect. A proper accounting for this will have to await a general study of the interaction of aspect and the aspectual character of the verb, but we may at least pause briefly on the question. Some of these verbs are patently stative, eg. 'jaf' "he knows", 'jixbah' "he resembles" and 'jismu' "he is named". But consider the inchoative 'itul' "he grows long". In my speech, this verb although quite infrequent, usually occurs with a second-order nominal like 'gurnata' "day" or 'storja' "story" for subject, and not, as far as I can make out, with a first-order nominal. On the other hand there is the inchoative ninth form verb 'twal' "he grew / became long" used regularly with both

a Perfect and an Imperfect form, and which occurs with both a first and a second-order nominal for subject (cf. the discussion of the sentences in (12), ch. 5, § 3.2). I mention this to point out that at least for some of the Perfect-less verbs mentioned in ch. 1, § 2.1.1, there might be some reason which is not necessarily semantic, such as the mere non-occurrence (for historical reasons?) of a certain form associated with a lexeme, which at least in my speech seems rather obscure and infrequent.

However in the case of verbs like 'jaf' "he knows", 'jismu' "he is named" and 'jixbah' "he resembles" we can tentatively suggest that the reason for the non-occurrence of the Perfect is the incompatibility of stativity with the encoding of a situation as an event.

### 3.3.2 The Imperfect

We have seen that by virtue of the complementary notions of unanalysability and completion, the Perfect in effect encodes a given situation as an event. The Imperfect on the other hand, encodes an unbounded series of repetitions of such events. The two can therefore be contrasted in terms of the distinction between punctuality and linearity (cf. Kurylowicz 1973, and below in this section). Miller (1971) relates imperfective verb forms to a structure containing two sub-structures, one 'entering a state' the other 'being in a state'. This analysis is

revised in Miller (1974a) so that imperfective verb forms are related to a structure 'being in a state', and 'entering a state' is treated as a presupposition. However from our discussion of the meaning of the Imperfect, of the adjectivalization 'miexi' and of the ged construction, it will be realised that the notion 'being in a state' is too general when applied to these forms. It serves to differentiate them from the Perfect, but it does not distinguish between the three of them, since they all have this notion in common. So I will continue to make use of the term 'unrestricted habitual' to refer to the encoding, by the Imperfect, of an unbounded series of repetitions of a completed journey, while allowing for Comrie's point that habituality is not the same as iterativity (Comrie 1976, p. 27). The term 'restricted habitual' refers to the encoding by the ged construction, of a bounded series of repetitions of a completed journey (cf. ch. 5, § 3.1); and the term 'progressive' is used to characterise the encoding, by an adjectivalization like 'miexi', of one journey in progress.

If we look at these three distinctions from the point of view of the opposition punctual / linear, it will be seen similarly, that the notion of 'linearity' applies to all three, but in different ways. The meaning of the Imperfect is linear in that an unbounded series is involved, while in the case of the ged construction the series is bounded. The meaning of the adjectivalization

is linear in that it encodes the progression of one journey.

In the preceding section we saw that the Perfect is associated with past time (ch. 5, § 3.3.1) and that this association can be construed as following naturally, though not necessarily, from the aspectual meaning of completion. The Imperfect too by virtue of its aspectual meaning of unrestricted habituality has certain tense associations. It will be seen from the sentences in (20) that without further qualification (but cf. below ch. 5,

20.	{	* a. il-bierah
		yesterday
Ġanni jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola		b. il-lum
"John walks from home to school"		today
..	{	c. ghada
		tomorrow

§ 6), the Imperfect is incompatible with past time : (20a) is unacceptable, and (20b) is interpreted as referring to a moment of time, within the period referred to by 'il-lum' "today", posterior to the moment of speaking. At first sight this would seem to contradict our characterization of the Imperfect in ch. 4, § 4, especially where it is said with reference to the graphic representation in (5) in that section, that the unbroken line represents that part of the series of repetitions of a completed journey open to the speaker's inspection and happening

before  $t_0$ . However it was also pointed out that the speaker need not have been in a position to observe that part of the series himself : he could also have been informed about it. In other words this association with past time can be treated merely as an implication. In isolation, however, and without further temporal specification, the Imperfect does encode a particular habit as happening in the present and the future.

It is one thing however to recognize that the Imperfect is associated with present and future time, but quite another to say that the Imperfect is used to denote "actions in the future" (cf. the review at the beginning of this chapter, § 1.2). In this respect, Schinas (1977, pp. 8-9) is correct in noting that when the Imperfect form is used to indicate futurity, it is with the added specification of a (future time) adverbial (cf. also the consideration of the future in ch. 5, § 4 below). Thus the sentence in (21a) encodes an unbounded series of repetitions of

21. a. Ġanni jmur l- iskola

he goes the school

"John goes to school"

b. Ghada mmur l- iskola u nara

tomorrow I go the school and I see

"I'll go to school tomorrow to see

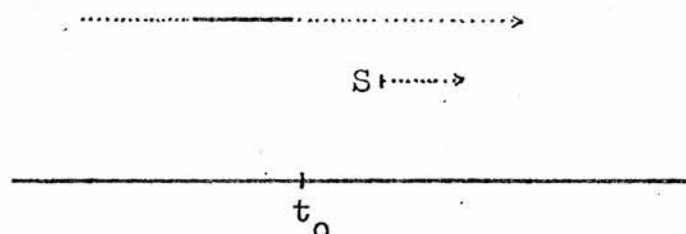
x'    ġara

what he happened

what happened"

John's journey to school, but in (21b) there is reference only to one journey which still has to happen at a moment in time posterior to  $t_0$ . Just as in the figure in (9) (cf. ch. 5, § 3.1) the time reference of the adjectivalization gieghed / qed restricts the unbounded nature of the series encoded by the Imperfect, so that we spoke of a restricted habitual interpretation for the qed construction, so in the case of (21b) the unbounded nature of the series encoded by the Imperfect 'mmur' "I go" is restricted to that portion which coincides with the time reference of 'ghada' "tomorrow" as in the figure in (22). The time

## 22. Representation of a situation encoded by the Imperfect and a future time adverbial



span encoded by 'ghada' is represented by the broken line which starts from a point S (that is, the temporal source) placed to the right of  $t_0$ , that is, at a point in time  $t_x$ . This line is broken because what it represents still has



to take place relative to the moment of speaking (cf. the discussion of the figure in (5) representing a situation encoded by the Imperfect, ch. 4, § 1).

### 3.3.3 The adjectivalization 'miexi'

Let us take up at this point the contrast of the adjectivalization 'miexi' with both the Perfect and the Imperfect, initiated in ch. 4, § 4. As can be seen from the sentences in (23) 'miexi' follows the Imperfect (cf.

23.

Ġanni miexi mid-dar sa l-iskola

"John is walking from home to school"

a. ~~x~~ il-bierah

yesterday

b. il-lum

today

c. (bhalissa)

now

d. ghada

tomorrow

the sentences in (20), ch. 5, § 3.3.2) rather than the Perfect (cf. the sentences in (15), ch. 5, § 3.3.1) in its collocation with certain time adverbials. Without any explicit time specification, (23) is understood as encoding a journey in progress at the moment of speaking, as in (23c). In the case of (23b) the moment of time within the period referred to by 'il-lum' "today" has to be either  $t_0$ , or else a point  $t_x$  posterior to the moment

of speaking. This resemblance to the Imperfect is not surprising in that, as pointed out in ch. 4, § 4, in both cases the goal (of the one journey in progress in miexi, and of the series of repetitions of completed journeys in jimxi) occurs at a point  $t_x$  to the right of  $t_0$ .

'Miexi' contrasts with the Perfect in another respect

24. a. Ganni miexi mid-dar sa l-iskola, imma  
he is walking but  
"John is walking from home to school but

ghadu        ma        wasalx  
he still neg. he arrived  
he hasn't arrived yet"

b. Ġanni qed jikteb l- ittra dal-  
he writes the letter this the  
"John is writing the letter this

ghodu, imma ghaḍu ma  
morning but he still neg.  
morning, but he hasn't  
spic̣c̣ahiex  
he finished her  
finished it yet"

too. In the discussion of the sentences in (16) and (17) in ch. 5, § 3.3.1, it was noted that the Perfect encodes

a situation as complete, so that (16) expresses a contradiction. However the adjectivalization 'miexi' encodes the situation on the way to completion, so that (24a) means that John is still in the process of walking to school but he hasn't arrived there yet. (24b) is the counterpart of (16), but with the ged construction instead of the Perfect. 'Kiteb' "he wrote" does not have an adjectivalization corresponding to 'miexi', so the ged construction is ambiguous between a restricted habitual and a progressive interpretation (cf. ch. 5, § 3.2). In (24b) it is the progressive interpretation which is involved, and unlike (16) there is no contradiction expressed here. That is to say, the adjectivalization 'miexi', unlike the Perfect, encodes a situation as analysable.

### 3.4 Aspect and modality

Besides the association of the Perfect with the past, and of the Imperfect with the present and the future (or the non-past), it is to be noted that there is also a distinction between the two in terms of modality (cf. Lyons 1968, § 7.5.8). Although a study of modality is beyond the scope of the present work, yet some mention must be made of its possible connections with aspect, especially in view of my consideration below of the verb 'kien' "he was" (cf. ch. 5, § 5).

Since as we have seen the Imperfect encodes an unbounded series of repetitions of a completed journey, and the series extends beyond  $t_0$  into the future (cf. the figure in (5), ch. 4, § 1), an element of modality comes into the Imperfect in a way in which it does not figure in the Perfect. The Imperfect encodes a claim about something happening partially in the future, whereas the Perfect encodes statements about past events : cf. Lyons (1977, § 15.4) : "Futurity is never a purely temporal concept; it necessarily includes an element of prediction or some related modal notion". Thus in the sentence

25. a. Ghada      forsi      mmur l-    iskola  
          tomorrow perhaps I go the school  
          "I might go to school tomorrow"
- b. Il-bierah forsi      mort      l-    iskola  
          yesterday perhaps I went the school  
          "I might have gone to school yesterday"

in (25a) the speaker modifies his assertion that he will go to school tomorrow by the expression 'forsi' "perhaps" so that a hearer will infer that the speaker's mind is not completely made up about the proposed journey. Note that the form of the verb in (25a) is the Imperfect. But in the sentence in (25b) the Perfect is used to refer to a journey which took place yesterday. From the inclusion of the expression 'forsi', a hearer will either infer

that the speaker has a bad memory and cannot remember whether he went to school or not yesterday, or else the speaker is deliberately withholding information about part of his movements the day before. Otherwise (25b) is unacceptable.

In the sentences in (26) we have an occurrence of the modal predicator 'jenhtieg' "it is necessary" (this

26. a. Jenhtieg            li    Ġanni jmur    l- iskola  
           it is necessary that John he goes the school  
           "John has to go to school"
- b. \*Jenhtieg li Ġanni mar l-iskola

is a seventh form verb realised only in the Imperfect. However there is another verb associated with the same base form and also expressing necessity, which is realized both by the Perfect and the Imperfect). In (26b) it is tautologous to prepose the necessity predicator before the Perfect 'mar', since the journey is encoded as already having taken place. The Imperfect in (26a) on the other hand is quite acceptable : its time reference includes the present and the future, but the presence of the necessity predicator rules out its present time reference, leaving the future, so that the 'going to school' is encoded as (necessarily) yet to happen.

Note in this connection that Bonello explicitly recognises the element of modality present in the Imperfect

of the verb 'kien' "he was" (cf. Bonello 1968, p. II-17, and below, ch. 5, § 5.1); apparently however, he is also aware of the presence of this element in the Imperfect in general (cf. 1968, pp. IV-5-6).

With respect to the contrast between the adjectivalization 'miexi' and the Perfect and the Imperfect in ch. 5, § 3.3.3, it was noted that in terms of the relation of aspect to tense, the adjectivalization 'miexi' (and the qed construction in the progressive interpretation) agrees with the Imperfect against the Perfect. However when it comes to the relation between aspect and modality, the situation is the other way round, as can be seen

27.

i Jenhtieg li Ġanni It is necessary that John	a. x mexa	} mid-dar sa from home to l-iskola school
	he walked	
	b. jimxi	
	he walks	
	c. x miexi	
	he is walking	

ii Jenhtieg li Ġanni	a. x kiteb	} l-ittra the letter
	he wrote	
	b. jikteb	
	he writes	
	c. x qed jikteb	
	he is writing	

from the sentences in (27). In (27i) although the goal (of the journey in progress in miexi, and of the series of repetitions in jimxi) occurs at  $t_x$  in both the adjectivalization (ic) and the Imperfect (ib), yet as was pointed out in ch. 4, § 4, the element of modality in the former is minimal, since what is encoded is a journey actually in progress. In (27i) it is tautologous to insert the predicator expressing necessity before either the Perfect 'mexa' in (ia) or the adjectivalization 'miexi' in (ic), since the former has already happened, while the latter is happening at the moment of speaking. Similarly in the case of (27ii) with the ged construction in (iic), which receives a progressive interpretation.

#### 4. The future

In view of the discussion below of relative tense (cf. ch. 5, § 6), it will be convenient to include some remarks here about the way futurity is expressed in Maltese. As we have already seen (cf. ch. 5, § 3.3.2) reference to future time may be made via the verb in the Imperfect and an appropriate time adverbial. However there is in Maltese a specific construction to express futurity, which is exemplified in the sentence in (28). The form se appears before the Imperfect verb, giving a clear future meaning to the sentence. For convenience I will refer to this construction by the term 'se construction'.



28. Ġanni se jimxi mid-dar sa l-iskola  
he walks

"John is going to walk from home to school"

In connection with this construction Sutcliffe (1936, p. 70) says that the form sejjer, a present participle of a disused verb with the meaning "going" is used as an auxiliary. His example is 'sejjer joqtol' which he translates as "he is going to kill" or "he is about to kill". Then he continues "The conversational abbreviation of this word is written se'r or even ser. With this has become identified in meaning the particle sa (compare the Arabic /sa/ from /sawfa/) which is commonly used in daily speech : 'sa nikteb' "I am about to write, I am going to write" ".

The form sejjer in fact is the adjectivalization associated suppletively with the verb 'mar' "he went", and inflects like other adjectivalizations (cf. the table in (21), ch. 4, § 4).

The identification of sa with sejjer proposed by Sutcliffe is rejected by Saydon (1935) who notes that sejjer but not sa implies physical movement. He gives the following example : if someone is going home for lunch, this situation can be expressed by the sentence in (29):

29. Sejjer niekol  
I going I eat  
"I'm going to eat"

but if someone is already at table and calls out to another that he is going to start eating, the situation can be expressed by the sentence in (30):

30. Se niekol

I eat

"I'm going to eat / start eating"

Notice that in both (29) and (30) the verb of eating is in the Imperfect.

Aquilina (1965, pp. 138-139) in talking about the future construction draws a distinction between ser "short for sejjer... indicating an action that is going to take place" and sa "indicating a very near future". However it seems that Aquilina's own example reproduced in (31), contradicts this characterization (cf. also

31. Jiena sa mmur l- Ingilterra sena ohra

I I go the England year another

"I shall go to England next year"

Schinas 1977, p. 25). Borg (1978, p. 210) says that sa is probably a reflex of issa "now". But even if such an assignment were plausible on historical (phonological) grounds, the association with the adjectivalization sejjer is much more attractive semantically (and synchronically; cf. also the quotation from Comrie 1976, p. 80, footnote

1 below, in ch. 5, § 6, about this construction in Arabic).

Now note the sentences in (32) : in (a) and (b), a

32. a. Marija marret tixtri rigal  
 Mary she went she buys a present  
 "Mary went to buy a present"
- b. Marija tmur tixtri l-Belt  
 Mary she goes she buys Valletta  
 "Mary goes shopping in Valletta"
- c. Marija sejra żżur 'il habibitha  
 she going she visits to friend hers  
 "Mary is going to visit her friend"
- d. Marija se żżur 'il habibitha  
 "Mary is going to visit her friend"

Perfect and Imperfect form of the verb 'mar' "he went" occurs, respectively, before the Imperfect verb tixtri "she buys". Notice that we have here a sequence of two finite verbs. In (32c) the feminine form of the adjectivalization 'sejjer' precedes another verb in the Imperfect, and in (32d) se occurs in the same position as sejra in (32c). With the discussion of the proposed identity of qed with gieghed in mind (cf. ch. 5, § 2.2) it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that an analogous (though not identical) relationship holds between se and sejjer.

Let us now turn to an examination of this proposal. First of all the form se is invariable while sejjer

inflects (cf. above and the reference to ch. 4, § 4). Secondly a form of 'sejjer' but not se can occur on its own in a sentence : 'Sejjer' said of a third person, means "He is going / leaving"; said of a first person, it means "I (masc.) am going / leaving", etc. Se always occurs before a verb in the Imperfect. In this position it is never stressed and it does not affect the stress pattern of the following word. In addition it is pronounced as one unit with the following Imperfect.

In its occurrence before another verb, se shares a partial distribution with sejjer : the two forms cannot occur before a verb in the Perfect ( Krier (1976, p. 87) wrongly analyses the form tippartecipa as the third person singular masculine of the Perfect. The form is an Imperfect one, and without further information could be either second person singular or third person singular feminine (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.1)). Similarly, both forms cannot occur before another adjectivalization. Furthermore se and a form of 'sejjer' also cannot occur before certain verbs realized only in the Imperfect (cf. the sentences in (7), ch. 5, § 2.2).

However se cannot replace all occurrences of a form of 'sejjer' (eg. when the latter occurs alone in a sentence). Although a form of 'sejjer' can replace many of the occurrences of se, there are certain contexts in which this is not possible. We shall be seeing below for

instance (ch. 5, § 5.3) that the Perfect or the Imperfect of the verb 'kien' "he was" can occur before the verb in a sentence to add certain temporal or aspectual specifications. It is in some of these contexts that an acceptable occurrence of se cannot be replaced by a form of 'sejjer' (cf. Schinas 1977, pp. 24-25).

Furthermore we have seen that at least in certain cases, the alternation between sejjer and se is accompanied by a distinction in meaning : physical movement vs. futurity (cf. Saydon's examples in (26) and (27) above). On the other hand it has to be admitted that this semantic distinction all but disappears before certain types of verbs, especially those associated with motion. Indeed the use of a form of 'sejjer' rather than se before the Imperfect of such verbs may even sound forced, the sentence in (33) being a case in point.

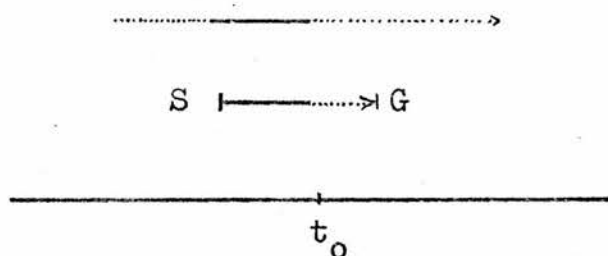
33. Ġanni { se } jibghat ir- rigal ghada  
           { ? sejjer } he sends the present tomorrow  
                           "John is going to send the present tomorrow"

In view of the preceding discussion, as well as the cross linguistic evidence (cf. for example, the future in English with 'going to' and Miller's (1974 b) analysis of the future in Russian) a localist interpretation of the se construction in Maltese does not seem unjustified.

It has to be remembered that it is the Imperfect form of the verb which figures in such constructions.

We turn now to the graphic representation in the figure in (34). The unbounded nature of the series encoded by

34. Representation of a situation encoded by the se construction



the Imperfect can be reinterpreted as a state (as we saw in the discussion of the qed construction, ch. 5, § 3.1). This interacts with the period of time encoded by se (in the upper sentence, making use of the analysis of auxiliaries as main verbs). If we analyse se analogously to the adjectivalization 'sejjer' then we have the progress of one journey, contemporaneous with the moment of speaking (represented by the partially unbroken arrow joining the two points S and G in the figure in (34)). But it is not merely a question of one journey in progress : the journey concerned is that of 'going', that is, only when this journey is completed, can the state encoded by the Imperfect come about, and that point (ie. the position of G) as can be seen from the figure, occurs at a moment

in time  $t_x$  posterior to the moment of speaking  $t_0$ . As Miller (1974 b) puts it, the notion of 'being in the future in a state X' can be derived from the notion of 'going into a state X'. The only semantic restriction we will have to place on se in view of the difference between it and sejjer we noted earlier, is that it occurs typically in an abstract journey (of movement through time). Apart from this, the future construction can justifiably be interpreted in Maltese in terms of the interaction between aspect (the Imperfect) and the localist analysis of se on the basis of the adjectivalization 'sejjer'.

## 5. The verb 'kien'

### 5.1 The aspectual opposition kien / ikun

In talking about the future earlier (ch. 5, § 4) we noted that when se occurs in certain sequences preceded by a form of the verb 'kien' "he was" and followed by an Imperfect verb, it cannot be replaced by a form of the adjectivalization 'sejjer'. Speaking of 'kien' in this position, Sutcliffe calls it the 'chief auxiliary' (cf. Sutcliffe, 1936, p. 69). We shall be looking at this auxiliary function later (cf. ch. 5, § 5.3) but in this section I want to examine 'kien' from the point of view of the aspectual distinction manifested in the opposition Perfect : kien vs. Imperfect : ikun. From the fact that



'kien' is realised by both a Perfect and an Imperfect form, we can see already that at least morphologically it has full status as a finite verb (cf. ch. 1, § 2.1.1). kien is usually translated as 'he was' and ikun as 'he will be'. The appearance of only a future meaning for the Imperfect calls for some explanation (cf. the discussion below) but it is clear that 'kien' is a verb of "being".

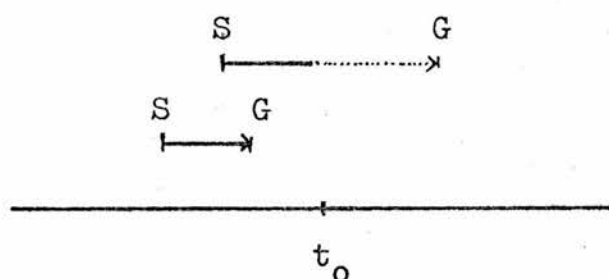
Now in talking about the verb of physical location 'qaghad' (cf. ch. 4, § 5) we worked with the characterization of an abstract journey through time (of physical location). In the case of 'kien' we can say that what is encoded is an abstract journey through time of location in existence or location in a state. Since the Perfect represents the journey as completed, the location in a state is in past time, and it is not surprising that kien is used to express past tense (cf. below, and § 5.3). In ch. 4, § 5, we looked briefly at predications of location and we saw that the adjectivalization qieghed may occur as a locative copula, as in the sentence in

35. a. Ġanni qieghed id- dar  
           he is located the house  
           "John is at home"

b. Ġanni kien qieghed id- dar  
           he was he is located the house  
           "John was at home"

(35a). In (35b) John's physical location is encoded as taking place in the past. Again making use of the analysis of auxiliaries as main verbs, the sentence in (35b) can be analysed as containing at least two underlying sentences : the upper one with the Perfect kien expressing past location in a state, and the lower one with the adjectivalization gieghed expressing physical location (in a place).

36. Representation of the situation encoded by kien and the adjectivalization gieghed



As can be seen from the figure in (36), the time span encoded by the Perfect kien (represented by the unbroken arrow joining S and G) interacts with the period of time encoded by the adjectivalization (represented by the partly broken arrow joining S and G), so that the portion of the time span occurring to the right of  $t_0$  (ie. in the future) is neutralised by the time span encoded by the Perfect, which is completely to the left of  $t_0$ . In effect the journey in progress encoded by gieghed is located in past time (cf. the figure in (4), ch. 4, § 1, for the

Perfect, and the figure in (20), ch. 4, § 4, for the adjectivalization).

We come now to the Imperfect ikun in the sentence in (37b). Notice that there is no difference as regards

37. a. Ġanni qieghed id- dar (bhalissa)  
       John he is located the house (like now)  
       "John is at home now / at this time"
- b. Ġanni jkun qieghed id-dar (bhalissa)  
       he is located  
       "John will be at home now / at this time"

time specification between (37a) and (37b). John's location at home is encoded as going on contemporaneously with the moment of speaking (cf. the figure in (20), ch. 4, § 4, representing a situation encoded by the adjectivalization). There is however an important difference : the status of the speaker's knowledge has changed : in (37a) he states that John is at home, in (37b) he supposes that John is at home. This modal meaning is not unexpected in view of what was said earlier about the Imperfect (cf. ch. 5, § 3.4). Although it is not my purpose to explore modality in this work, yet we have to take a closer look at this Imperfect form.

The time reference of the Imperfect includes both the present and the future (cf. ch. 5, § 3.3.2). Now in (37b) a future interpretation is excluded by the time

adverbial 'bhalissa' "now". But the adjectivalization gieghed already refers to the present, and in this respect the present time specification of jkun is tautologous. However the element of modality present in 'jkun' can still apply to the present time, and hence we obtain the interpretation in (37b). Note that this modal element is present even more strongly in the case of 'jkun' since the modal associations of the Imperfect interact with the meaning of "being" in 'kien' "he was" (cf. also below).

It is interesting to note that besides (the loan word) 'amen' for "amen, so be it", Maltese has also the expression 'hekk ikun' in which the Imperfect of 'kien' follows the expression 'hekk' "so / thus / like this".

In talking about the Perfect kien, Grech (1977, p. 32) notes that before a verb in the Imperfect, this form has the effect of "pushing the time... of occurrence into the past. Hence we can say that in reality it is an auxiliary verb whose function is concerned with time reference. Hence it is related to the category of tense, rather than that of aspect". From the preceding discussion it will be seen that Grech is wrong in denying the relation of kien to aspect : the particular time reference she notes (correctly) derives from the aspectual distinction at play in the Perfect interacting with the lexical meaning of the verb (a completed abstract journey of location in a state). Both Zammit Mangion (1977, p.

80) and Borg (1978, p. 210) associate the Imperfect ikun with the future. In this they follow Cremona (1962, pp. 49-50 and p. 267) who states explicitly that jkun expresses only the future. As we saw in the sentence in (37b) however, ikun is not incompatible with present time reference, so that there is no basis for treating the Imperfect of 'kien' as different from the Imperfect of other verbs (cf. ch. 5, § 3.3.2). Furthermore, what is involved is not simply an association with (present and future, or non-past) tense, but also one with modality, again arising out of the characterization we gave earlier for the Imperfect (cf. ch. 5, § 3.4).

Bonello, as mentioned earlier (cf. ch. 5, § 3.4) explicitly recognizes the element of modality present in the Imperfect ikun (cf. Bonello 1968, p. II-17). Schinas (1977, pp. 12, ff.) also recognizes the association of ikun with modality but in her treatment this element appears suddenly, and apart from the meaning of the Imperfect in general. She draws a distinction between what she calls 'epistemic jkun' (ie. the modal element in the meaning of the form) and 'jkun of futurity'. Although it is true that she does not postulate two lexemes, yet in the light of our discussion above, we can see that the modal and future interpretations of the Imperfect of 'kien' are inextricably related together : depending on the (sentential) context, part of the meaning

may be curtailed, as in the case of (37b) in which the future is excluded, and it seems quite unnecessary to talk of the two sense components in isolation.

## 5.2 'Kien' as copula?

In this section I want to look briefly at the alleged status of the verb 'kien' as a copula in Maltese. Bonello (1968, pp. II-11, ff.) for instance calls 'kien' the linking verb and says that "it links the NP Subject with a Substantive or a locative Adverbial... In the Present Tense the linking Verb<sup>is</sup>/covert [two of his examples are the ascriptive predication in (38a) and the predication of location in (38b)]:

38. a. It- tifla twila  
           the girl long (fem.)  
           "The girl is tall"
- b. It- tifel hawn  
           the boy here  
           "The boy is here"

... the linking Verb is overt in the Past Tense or when preceded by a verbal Particle... [his examples, two predications of location, are reproduced in (39)]:

39. a. It- tifla kienet hawn  
           the girl she was here  
           "The girl was here"

39. b. It- tifla ser            tkun    hawn  
           the girl she going she be here  
           "The girl is going to be here"

For the appearance of ser before the Imperfect of 'kien' in (39b), cf. ch. 5, § 4.

Bonello gives examples of all the three types of predication we mentioned earlier (cf. ch. 1, § 5.4). For the moment, I want to restrict the discussion to the predications of location in (38b) and (39). It was noted in ch. 1, § 5.4, that under certain conditions (probably relating to information structure) the adjectivalization 'qieghed' appears in such predications. This point was again made in ch. 4, § 5, and exemplified in the sentence in (35) in that section (reproduced here as (40)). Although the problem of this occurrence of 'qieghed' was

40. Ġanni qieghed            id- dar  
           John he is located the house  
           "John is in the house / at home"

ignored in that same chapter, in all the sentences in (36a) - (36e) an occurrence of the appropriate form of 'qieghed' is quite possible. In fact an occurrence of 'qieghed' is also possible in all Bonello's predications of location as in (41):



41. a. It- tifel qieghed hawn  
 the boy he is located here  
 "The boy is here"
- b. It- tifla kienet qieghda hawn  
 the girl she was she is located here  
 "The girl was here"
- c. It- tifla ser tkun qieghda hawn  
 the girl she going she be she is located here  
 "The girl is going to be here"

From this it follows that 'qieghed' is a much more plausible candidate for a copula or a 'linking verb' than 'kien', at least in the predications under consideration. This point is further strengthened by Bonello's own admission that the linking verb is covert in the present tense (cf. above). Above all, such a hypothesis respects the meaning of each of the forms : we do not need to invoke any special sense for the occurrence of 'qieghed' in these contexts, since it is the adjectivalization of the verb of physical location 'qaghad'. Furthermore, we do not need to postulate a special syntactic category ('copula' or 'linking verb') for 'kien' and at the same time provide for its sometimes being covert : in view of our discussion in the preceding section (cf. ch. 5, § 5.1) the occurrence of 'kien' in these predications can be seen simply as that of the verb in a matrix sentence expressing past tense (via the interaction of aspect and

lexical meaning) in which the predication of location is then analyzed as embedded. Where 'kien' does not occur, it is simply because it is not needed, and not because it is present covertly.

This still leaves the occurrence of 'kien' in ascriptive and equative predications. Obviously I cannot dwell on these problems at any length here, but I will briefly indicate the lines of a tentative solution. We have already seen that adjectives inflect for number, and in the singular, for gender (cf. the table in (21) ch. 4, § 4). Just as in the case of verbs, an adjective too may be the only expression in a complete sentence, and it seems to me that the burden of proof lies with those who would contend that there is a covert element in an ascriptive predication (in the present) like the one in (38a). We have just seen that in the case of predications of location, the adjectivalization gieghed occurs under certain conditions. Similarly, in the case of equative predications, an appropriate form of the personal pronoun occurs under these conditions (cf. ch. 1, § 5.4). But for ascriptive predications it was noted that an occurrence of the personal pronoun sounds highly odd, as in the sentence in (42b):

42. a. It- tifel marid  
           the boy    sick (masc.)  
           "The boy is sick"  
       b.? It-tifel hu marid

So a case can plausibly be made for saying that an appropriate form of 'kien' occurs only when the ascription of a quality is being made with reference to past time : the analysis of 'kien' as a verb in a superordinate sentence expressing tense (via the interaction of aspect with the lexical meaning of the verb) applies also in this case.

The argument for equative predications follows that for the predications of location above, except that instead of the adjectivalization 'qieghed', an appropriate form of the personal pronoun occurs under certain conditions, as in the sentences in (43).

43. i a. Ġanni t- tabib  
           John the doctor..  
           "John is the doctor"
- i b. Ġanni hu t- tabib  
           John he the doctor
- ii a. Ġanni kien it- tabib  
           John he was the doctor  
           "John was the doctor"
- b. Ġanni kien hu t- tabib  
           John he was he the doctor

Note that the sentence in (43iib) is heavily marked (unlike (iia)) but I will not go into this question here.

Just as kien expresses past time in these predications, so the Imperfect ikun, preceded by the form se (cf. ch. 5, § 4) expresses future time. In this case the predication (of location, ascriptive or equative) is embedded in an underlying sentence containing ikun, and this in turn is embedded in a sentence with se (consistent with our adoption of the analysis of auxiliaries as main verbs in the earlier sections of this chapter).

An analysis of 'kien' as a copula involves Zammit Mangion (1977, p. 61) in a number of difficulties. In the predication of location

Kien hawn  
he was here  
"He was here"

she recognises that "kien appears to have no notional meaning of its own, its meaning being purely functional, as it serves to indicate past presence, as against absence, of a person or object". But in the ascriptive predication

Kien twil  
he was long (masc.)  
"He was tall"

she says that kien "serves to attribute the quality 'twil' to the subject". As we have seen, the (adjective) form twil on its own already serves to attribute the quality it denotes to a masculine singular subject. In the case

of the equative predication

Ġanni kien raġel

John he was man

"John was a man"

the function of kien is said to be "that of an existential predicator". In these predications however the notion of 'equation' (rather than 'existence'), if not understood implicitly from the mere apposition of two nominals, is expressed by an appropriate form of the personal pronoun.

### 5.3 'Kien' as auxiliary?

In ch. 1, § 2.7, we noted Sutcliffe's remarks about the two passive constructions involving the past participle and the "auxiliary" verb 'kien' "he was" or 'ġie' "he came". Certain syntactic features of these constructions were also examined in ch. 3, § 1.3. Here I want to take another brief look at the passive construction with 'kien', as in the sentence in (44).

44. Ġanni kien maqtul

John he was killed (masc.)

"John was killed"

If we remember that the so-called past participle was the adjectivalization which emerged as most adjective-like in our discussion in ch. 4, § 4, it can easily be

seen that the construction in (44) can be treated as an ascriptive predication with past time reference. Without the occurrence of 'kien', it would simply be an ascriptive predication with present time reference as in (45)

45. Ġanni maqtul  
       John killed (masc.)  
       "John is killed"

Aquilina (1959, p. 350; 1965, p. 135), Krier (1976, p. 60) and Fenech (1978a, p. 40) follow Sutcliffe in their treatments of the construction with the verb 'ġie' "he came" : "This construction is due to foreign influence ('venne ucciso' [that is, the Italian verb 'venire' "to come" in the past, followed by the past participle of the verb 'uccidere' "to kill"])] and is regarded as condemned by competent opinion" (Sutcliffe 1936, p. 71). Apart from the lack of justification advanced for the contention that this construction is due to foreign influence, implicit in Sutcliffe's treatment is the accordance of functional equivalence to the two constructions, one of which is discarded (presumably for historical or stylistic reasons). However as Zammit Mangion (1977, pp. 80, ff.) points out there is an important difference between the two (which I will only mention here), namely, that the construction with 'kien' has a markedly stative

quality about it and it occurs less frequently than the construction with 'gie' when the (non-nuclear) agent is specified. In view of our discussion of (44) and (45) above, such a difference is hardly surprising.

Besides the occurrence of 'kien' in the so-called passive construction however, there are also other important instances of the use of one of its forms (Perfect or Imperfect) before other verbs in the sentence. It is, I suspect, the frequency of this type of occurrence, which has led most of the scholars who have treated the problem to regard 'kien' as an auxiliary verb (cf. especially Sutcliffe 1936, pp. 69, ff.; and Cremona 1962, pp. 59, ff.; cf. also Schinas 1977, § 1.1.6).

Of kien before a verb in the Perfect, Aquilina (1965, p. 221) says that it indicates an action "which had already taken place, in the past (the Pluperfect)" (cf. also Sutcliffe 1936, p. 69; Vella 1970, p. 286; Grech 1977, pp. 26-27 and Zammit Mangion 1977, p. 61). Notice however that the function of kien before a Perfect verb is exactly the same as in the other instances of its occurrence we noted above : through the interaction of aspect and lexical meaning, it conveys the notion of past location in a state. Since the verb in the Perfect following it, also has a past time association, the "pluperfect" interpretation results from this "double past".



For kien before an Imperfect verb or before the ged construction (cf. ch. 5, § 3.1) Aquilina says that it denotes an "action which was taking place in the past" (1965, p. 221). However this is too general a characterization : as we saw earlier, the Imperfect expresses 'unrestricted habituality' (cf. ch. 5, § 3.1), while the ged construction typically expresses 'restricted habituality' for those verbs which have an adjectivalization like miexi; and both 'restricted habituality' and 'progressivity' for those verbs which do not have an adjectivalization (cf. ch. 5, § 3.2). Cf. also Vella (1970, p. 286) who draws a distinction between "past continuous" and "habitual", and Grech (1977, p. 32) who speaks of a "habit in the past".

Sutcliffe recognises an interpretation of progressivity for his 'present participle' (ie. an adjectivalization like miexi) when it is preceded by kien (1936, p. 70). Vella (1970, p. 286) also mentions this particular sequence and he says that "the active participle may be used instead of the Imperfect". Unlike Sutcliffe, however, he recognises no distinction in meaning between the two constructions. Grech (1977, pp. 32, ff.) also considers this sequence and notes that while in a construction like 'Kien miexi ...' "He was walking..." the interpretation is simply that of an incomplete action (ie. progressivity) in the past, in the case of 'Kien hiereg...' which she translates as "He was about to / supposed to go out...", she notes

that "there is an element of uncertainty as to what actually happened. What the verb conveys is only what the subject decided to do, together with the possibility or otherwise that this may not have been carried out for one reason or another. The sense of 'about to' means "he was on the point of". Is it possible, then, in view of the element of probability introduced here, to consider 'kien' as having the function of a modal?" (p. 33). I agree with Grech that this is a possible interpretation, although depending on the (sentential) context, the progressive interpretation is also possible (as in the case of 'kien miexi').

A solution to this problem will have to await a study of the interaction of aspect and modality (cf. ch. 5, § 3.4). All I can do here is indicate briefly a possible line of approach by suggesting that the element of modality crops up as a result of the interaction of aspect and aspectual character (cf. ch. 5, § 3.2). The adjectivalization miexi is associated with 'mexa' which we characterized as encoding an extended journey (cf. ch. 2, § 1). But hiereg is the adjectivalization associated with 'hareg' "he went out" which, as in the case of 'telaq' "he left" (cf. the sentence in (3a), ch. 2, § 1.1) we can characterize as encoding a border-crossing followed by an extended journey. In the case of 'kien miexi' we have, as Grech notes, progressivity in the past. With 'kien hiereg',

although the progressive interpretation is still possible, the element of modality is undeniably present, and it could perhaps be interpreted as resulting from the interaction of the time span referred to by 'kien' and encoded as over before  $t_0$ , with the encoding of a border-crossing in progress. Whatever the eventual solution to this problem might turn out to be however, I do not think it is necessary to consider the possibility that the modality here has anything to do with 'kien' as such : in other words, I do not think that Grech's example necessarily runs counter to the proposed analysis of the Perfect in general (cf. ch. 5, § 3.3.1 and § 3.4) and of kien in particular (cf. ch. 5, § 5.1).

Sutcliffe (1936, p. 69) and Aquilina (1965, p. 222) also mention the occurrence of the Imperfect ikun before another verb in the sentence. Of this sequence Aquilina notes (rather unclearly) that it "indicates... a future action that had already taken place". However unless future time is specified, either via a time adverbial, or through the occurrence of se before ikun, what is involved primarily in this construction is not futurity at all, but modality (cf. the discussion of the sentences in (37), ch. 5, § 5.1). The speaker expresses his supposition that an event has taken place (or that it will have taken place at the (future) time specified in the sentence).

It seems that both Sutcliffe and Aquilina miss the modal element in the Imperfect in general. Even in talking of the occurrence of ikun before an Imperfect verb, there is no mention of it : cf. Sutcliffe 1936, p. 69, and Aquilina 1965, p. 222, who simply says of the latter construction that it "indicates... a future action still to take place". What is involved in fact, is the encoding of the speaker's supposition about an unrestricted habit (cf. Grech 1977, pp. 33-34, and Schinas 1977, pp. 12, ff. who show an awareness of the element of modality present at least in the Imperfect of 'kien').

Now although Bonello draws a distinction between 'kien' (which he calls the 'Linking Verb' : 1968, p. II-11) and all other verbs (which are classed as 'non-Linking'), in the course of constructing his grammar he makes the claim that 'kien' as linking verb is not categorically different from any other verb (cf. pp. IV-6, ff.) : his grammar does not provide for a linking-Verb node, and 'kien' is introduced into the grammar by the same rule that introduces other verbs. I will not here stop to examine his justification for such a claim (cf. pp. IV-7, ff.) but I simply point out that this is in accord with my own treatment, whereby the category 'copula' to account for the occurrence of 'kien' in predicative structures is rejected (cf. ch. 5, § 5.2).

However Bonello's grammar has an element Aux which together with the category VP is directly dominated by an element Pred-Phrase (the latter in turn, together with VP is directly dominated by S, cf. p. III-2 and IV-5). Bonello further notes that Aux is optional and that although both Aux and VP take tense, yet they do not necessarily share the same tense : as we have just seen above, the Perfect of 'kien' may occur with either the Perfect or the Imperfect of another verb (or indeed with the adjectivalization associated with that verb), and similarly for the Imperfect of 'kien'.

So although Bonello treats 'kien' in predicative structures like any other verb (syntactically, that is : again cf. the discussion in ch. 5, § 5.2), he still retains its status as an auxiliary in constructions in which it is followed by another verb (or by an adjectivalisation). However as we have been seeing above there are grounds for adopting another analysis, whereby sentences with 'kien' (not only in this position, but also in passive constructions) are associated with a semantic structure containing at least two sentences.

This approach would do away with special subclassifications of the occurrences of 'kien' in predicative structures (ascriptive, equative and of location, cf. ch. 5, § 5.2), in passive constructions and in sentences with other verbs (or adjectivalizations) also present

(cf. above), in preference for a unified treatment of 'kien' as a regular verb exhibiting the normal aspectual opposition Perfect / Imperfect common to other verbs in the language.

## 6. Relative tense

So far in our discussion of the relation of aspect and tense we have limited ourselves to a consideration of the location in time of a situation relative to the moment of utterance : such a relation is referred to as 'absolute tense' (cf. Comrie 1976, § 0.1) or primary tense (cf. Lyons 1977, § 15.4). Since what is grammaticalised in Maltese is primarily an aspectual distinction (with associations of modality and time-reference) it would be more appropriate to speak of 'deictic temporal reference' rather than 'tense' (cf. Lyons 1977, § 15.4). As noted in ch. 5, § 1.2, however, I use the term 'tense' in the sense of 'time-reference'. Also it has to be remembered that tense, but not aspect, is deictic. Aspect does not relate the time of the situation to any other time-point; rather it is concerned with the temporal distribution or contour of a situation (cf. Hockett 1958, § 27.9), or in Comrie's terms, with the internal temporal constituency of the one situation (cf. Comrie 1976, § 0.1).

The time of a situation however, may also be located relative to the time of some other situation (instead of



to the moment of utterance) : such a relation is referred to as relative tense (cf. Comrie, § 0.1) or secondary tense (cf. Lyons, § 15.4).

In this section I want to examine whether the notion of relative tense has any bearing on the opposition Perfect / Imperfect, in the light of Comrie's remarks about the opposition in written Arabic (cf. Comrie 1976, § 4.4). I want to make it clear however, that I am not primarily interested in challenging Comrie's analysis of the aspectual opposition in Arabic. Rather I want to try to establish here whether what Comrie says of written Arabic holds true also of Maltese.

Comrie starts by giving examples in which the Perfective form (corresponding to the Maltese Perfect) is interpreted with perfective and past meaning, and the Imperfective form (corresponding to the Maltese Imperfect) is interpreted with imperfective and present meaning. He then gives an example in which an Imperfect form, in a sentence with a future time adverbial, is interpreted with future time reference (Comrie, pp. 78-79). So far the situation is analogous to that obtaining in Maltese (cf. especially, ch. 5, § 3.3.1 and § 3.3.2).

Next he includes a sentence with a subordinate clause, reproduced here as (46). Comrie says, "The Imperfective ʔajīʔu in isolation would be taken as referring to present



46. ʔajīʔu (Ipfv.)-ka ʔidā 'hmarra (Pfv.)

I-come to-you when it-ripen

"I shall come to you when the unripe

'l-busru

the unripe-date

date ripens (shall ripen)"

time, but the presence of the subordinate temporal clause functions as a temporal adverbial forcing at least a preference for an interpretation with future reference, ie. 'I shall come'. But the interpretation of the Perfective 'hmarra (citation form ʔahmarra) is not, as predicted on the hypothesis that the Perfective / Imperfective opposition is purely one of tense, with past time reference, but rather with future time reference (ie. the date has not yet ripened). However, what is important is not the absolute time reference of this verb, but its relative time reference, since what it indicates is that the ripening of the date will precede my coming to you. So one might still conclude that the difference between the Perfective and the Imperfective is one of relative tense" (p. 79).

Note however that earlier (p. 18, footnote 2) he says "Interestingly enough, the so-called Perfective in Arabic, which is also often defined as indicating a completed situation, is not the form used for future time

reference, even for situations viewed as complete". And in his discussion of the sentence reproduced in (48a) below, he notes "The extent to which aspect or tense is predominant seems to have changed over the course of the development of Arabic. In Classical Arabic, there are examples of the Perfective with present or future time reference... although the use of the Perfective with the specific marker of Future Tense, sa- or sawfa ... is excluded even in Classical Arabic" (p. 80, footnote 1).

For the incompatibility of the Maltese Perfect with the sa construction, cf. ch. 5, § 4.

Now there is an important difference in the Maltese equivalent to (46) which is given in (47):

- |                           |   |                                    |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| 47.                       | { | a. jsir (Ipf.) it- tamar           |
|                           |   | he becomes the dates               |
|                           |   | "the dates ripen"                  |
| Nigik (Ipf.) meta         |   | b. jkun (Ipf.) sar (Pf.) it- tamar |
| I come to you when        |   | he (will) be he became the dates   |
| "I will come to you when" |   | "the dates will have ripened"      |

In (47a) both the main verb and the subordinate verb are in the Imperfect, while in (47b) although the subordinate verb is in the Perfect, it is obligatorily preceded by the Imperfect of 'kien'. As regards the

future reference of the main verb (the Imperfect nigi) this is simply another case in which the specification of future time in the sentence as a whole interacts with the meaning of the Imperfect and excludes the association with present time (cf. ch. 5, § 3.3.2). Of course, it is not merely the presence of a subordinate temporal clause (cf. what Comrie says of the Arabic example) but the overall future meaning of this clause which affects the interpretation of nigi.

In (47a) both the Imperfect verbs have a future time reference, relative to the moment of speaking. In our terms, two journeys are encoded (as occurring in future time) : a journey of (my) coming and a journey of the dates ripening. The sequential ordering (in time) of these two journeys is not due to the Imperfect form used in encoding both, but has to do with the logical structure underlying the sentence : nigi is the main verb and jsir is the subordinate verb in the when-clause. The occurrence of the latter is presented as the condition for the occurrence of the former.

In (47b) the future interpretation given to the main verb nigi again follows from the overall future time reference in the sentence as a whole. Although (47b) does not exclude the interpretation of the sequential ordering of the two journeys arising from the logical structure underlying both sentences (and advanced for

(47a)), the focus here is on the specific encoding of a temporal ordering. The Perfect sar is embedded (following our adoption of the analysis of auxiliaries as main verbs, cf. ch. 5, § 3.1) in a sentence with the Imperfect ikun. This Imperfect, just like jsir in (47a) receives a future interpretation, and since the overall reference is to future time, the element of modality, although not incompatible with the general meaning of the sentence, does not come so strongly to the fore as in the case of occurrences of ikun in sentences with overall present time reference. In effect, we have therefore a Perfect form embedded in a sentence expressing future time. In this case, the temporal ordering derives more from the juxtaposition of a Perfect form (in the future) with an Imperfect verb. In this connection note that I prefer the translation "will have ripened" to Comrie's "ripens (shall ripen)".

In his discussion of the sentence in (46) Comrie says that "one might still conclude that the difference between the Perfective and the Imperfective is one of relative tense". However in the case of the Maltese sentence in (47b) we do not need to appeal to a category of tense different to the one we considered earlier for the Perfect : that is, an analysis involving simply an association of the Perfect with absolute (past) tense is not incompatible with the facts in (47b). Note that the Imperfect ikun is obligatorily present here, unlike

the Arabic example in (46) in which the Perfect occurs on its own in the subordinate sentence. This occurrence of ikun can be taken as neutralising the association of the Perfect sar with past time (ie. with a point  $t_x$ , cf. ch. 5, § 3.3.1). This still leaves the notion of completion and anteriority present in the Perfect sar, the future time interpretation accorded to the main verb in the Imperfect, nigi, and the logical structure of the sentence in (47b) as a whole, to take care of the sequential ordering in time of the two journeys.

Schinas (1977, pp. 65-66) speaks of a "Past in the Future", in which a Perfect verb is preceded by the sa construction (cf. ch. 5, § 4) with the Imperfect of 'kien'. One of her examples is reproduced in (48).

48. Sa      l-    ġimgha li    ġejja      sa  
          up to the week    that she coming I going  
          "By next week

nkun                    ktibt    it- tezi  
 I (will) be I wrote the thesis  
 I will have written my thesis"

Notice that the initial form sa in (48) is the goal preposition we looked at in ch. 2, § 1.4. Even if the form sa (of futurity) preceding the Imperfect nkun is removed, the future interpretation of (48) is not affected.

In this respect Grech (1977, p. 34) is wrong in concluding that "in Maltese... perfectivity is not recognised in the future".

There is however at least one possible counter example to the retention of the analysis of the Perfect as associated with absolute, rather than with relative tense. Imagine a situation in which the family is about to go for a picnic. One member of the family, exasperated at the interminable delays, could plausibly and somewhat ironically ask : 'Tlaqna?' This is the Perfect first person plural form of 'telaq' "he left" and in this context could be translated (rather improbably in English) as "Did we leave?" In this case the verb in the Perfect refers to a situation which has not yet happened, as in the case of (47b), but here there is no form like ikun (obligatorily) present. Admittedly there are complex factors at work here, such as the possible relevance of the distinction between the historical and the experiential modes of description (cf. Lyons 1977, § 15.4), speech act theory and the notion of conversational implicature. Without wanting to press the point too much, it might still be possible to argue however, that the use of the Perfect here, confirms rather than disproves an analysis in terms of an association with absolute tense : the irony of the retort lies exactly in the use of a Perfect form to refer to a situation which still does not obtain.

Comrie also mentions a sentence (reproduced in (48a)) to support his view that the Imperfective "can be used with past time reference, provided only that it also has imperfective meaning" (p. 80).

48a wa ʔattabaʕuwā (Pfv.) mā tatlū(Ipfv.)  
and they-follow what they-recite

'l- šayātīnu ʕalā mulki sulaymāna  
the demons in reign Solomon

"And they followed what the demons used to  
recite in Solomon's reign"

He notes that the expression for 'in Solomon's reign' is an overt indicator of past time, so that just as the Imperfective can be interpreted as referring to the future, if the context makes it clear that the reference is to the future, so with an appropriate context, it can also be used with past time reference.

Now notice the Maltese sentences in (49) : (49a) with a Perfect and an Imperfect corresponding to Comrie's example, together with the past time adverbial, is unacceptable. Either the Perfect and the Imperfect are retained, but the adverbial removed, as in (49b); or else the Perfect kien is preposed before the Imperfect verb, as in (49c). Note that the 'habitual in the past' interpretation for the Imperfect verb jghidu is possible



49. a. x U semghu (Pf.) minn dak li jghidu (Ipf.)  
 and they heard from that that they say  
 "they obeyed"

x- xjaten fi zmien Salamun  
 the demons in time Solomon  
 "in Solomon's time"

- b. U semghu (Pf.) minn dak li jghidu (Ipf.)  
 and they heard from that that they say  
 "And they obeyed what

x- xjaten  
 the demons  
 the demons say"

- c. U semghu (Pf.) minn dak li kienu jghidu  
 they heard they were they say

x-xjaten fi zmien Salamun  
 "And they obeyed what the demons used to  
 say in Solomon's time"

only in (49c) in which the Perfect kien occurs before it. In (49b) although the Perfect verb receives a past time interpretation, the Imperfect verb is still translated via an English non-past form. Although the act of obedience is encoded as occurring prior to the moment of speaking, the demons' elocution is encoded as a generic statement and hence not only as occurring in past time (as in Comrie's example) but also as contemporary with

and going beyond the moment of speaking.

It would seem, from the sentences in (49), that like the Perfect, the Imperfect is associated with absolute tense, that is non-past tense . But now consider the sentences in (50) mentioned by Sutcliffe (1936, p. 164), for which he notes that "the imperfect... denotes an action contemporaneous with the main verb..."

50. a. Hargu (Pf.)      jigru (IpF.)

they went out they run

"They ran out"

b. Damu (Pf.)      saghtejn magghom jithaddtu (IpF.)

they remained hours two with them they converse

"They remained a couple of hours talking  
with them"

The past habitual interpretation we noted for 'kienu jghidu' in (49c) does not obtain here, although (50a) is a sentence with a sequence : Perfect followed by Imperfect. In this sentence the Imperfect could be said to have an adverbial function in that it qualifies the manner of going out encoded by the verb in the Perfect. Such an interpretation is compatible with our previous analysis of the Imperfect as having a stative quality about it by virtue of the (unbounded) series of repetitions of completed journeys it encodes (cf. the quotation from Lyons in ch. 5, § 3.1). However the running encoded

by the Imperfect in (50a) occurs (like the going out encoded by the Perfect) prior to the moment of speaking, and in this case there is no intervening form of 'kien' to locate jigru in a past state. This situation is hardly compatible with an analysis of the Imperfect as associated with absolute (non-past) tense. Similarly in the case of (50b) the conversing encoded by the Imperfect occurs before the moment of speaking (an alternative version of (50b) is the following, in which the Imperfect verb follows immediately after the Perfect, as in (50a) : 'Damu jithaddtu saghtejn magghom').

Consider further the sentences in (51), which exemplify a construction noted by Sutcliffe (1936, p. 165; cf. also Aquilina 1965, p. 221). Here an appropriate form of the personal pronoun is involved, followed by the conjunction u "and", and the verb in the Imperfect or the appropriate form of the adjectivalization associated with the verb.

51. a. Ahna u hergin            rajna 'l Ġanni  
          we and we going out we saw to John  
          "As we were going out, we saw John"
- b. Pawlu ra        'l Marija hija u tikteb  
          Paul he saw to Mary she and she writes  
          "Paul saw Mary as she was writing"

l- ittra  
      the letter  
      the letter"

51. c. x Pawlu ra 'l Marija hija u kitbet l-ittra

In (51a) the event of seeing John is encoded via the Perfect, and occurs before the moment of speaking. But the process of going out encoded by the plural form of the adjectivization 'hierēg' ('hareg' "he went out"), in which the event of seeing is included, also occurs before the moment of speaking. Similarly in (51b) the event of seeing Mary (encoded via the Perfect) occurs before the moment of speaking, and so does the process of Mary's writing the letter, in which the event of seeing is included. On the other hand (51c) with the Perfect following the conjunction is unacceptable. As was pointed out earlier (ch. 5, § 3.3.1) a relationship of inclusion cannot hold between two events.

It seems that from the foregoing discussion there are some grounds for concluding that the Perfect in Maltese is associated with absolute, rather than with relative (past) tense. However in the case of the Imperfect, although there is an association with non-past tense (unless there is explicit information to the contrary) one can hardly speak of a relation to absolute (non-past) tense.

## 7. Conclusion

Such a conclusion raises a further question. In his book Comrie draws a distinction between languages which are tenseless, such as Yoruba and Igbo, in which there are no specific markers of past versus present tense, although there are markers of aspect (Comrie 1976, p. 82) and a language like (written) Arabic in which the distinction Perfective / Imperfective is called a "combined tense / aspect opposition" (p. 78). In languages without tense markers, he notes that "there is a close relationship between Imperfective Aspect and present time, and between Perfective Aspect and past time". And then he adds "This is not too dissimilar from the situation in Arabic... where there is a set of forms incorporating both Past Tense and Perfective Aspect" (p. 83)... But this is exactly the conclusion we reached for the Maltese Perfect (cf. § 6, above). In other words, in relation to the question of time reference, the Perfect and the Imperfect are not alike, as we would have expected them to be if the distinction involved were really one of a combined tense / aspect opposition. Instead, we find that the Perfect, but not the Imperfect, has associations with absolute tense.

Besides in Maltese there is a specific construction to express future time, which like the ged construction (for a restricted habitual and / or a progressive interpretation, cf. ch. 5, § 3.2) makes use of aspectually

marked forms (se / sejjer and qed / gieghed with the Imperfect).

Furthermore just as the Perfect and the Imperfect are not alike with respect to the question of time reference, so they are also unlike with respect to the question of modality : the Imperfect, but not the Perfect, is modally marked (cf. ch. 5, § 3.4).

Finally the opposition Perfect / Imperfect of the verb 'kien' interacting with its lexical meaning is made use of in Maltese to express, respectively, past tense (via kien) and modality (via ikun).

In view of the foregoing, rather than an analysis in terms of a combined tense / aspect opposition, I prefer (at least for Maltese) an analysis of the aspectual opposition as the fundamental one, with tense and modal associations deriving from it.

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